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ABSTRACT

The Conflict Resolution Advisory Team has been involved with establishing and maintaining Conflict Resolution programs at Toronto Board (Canada) elementary and secondary schools. Research and Assessment was requested to support the Advisory Team in an evaluation of the programs in 1995. Questionnaires were sent to students (n=1181) and teachers (n=324), and telephone interviews were conducted with facilitators of Conflict Resolution programs (n=36) between March and June, 1995. The survey found that although teachers and students had, on the whole, positive attitudes about the school they attended, teachers were more positive than were students. Additional findings were reported in regard to: how safe students and teachers felt their schools were, the degree to which students talked with adults if they had problems, the types of conflicts observed, the frequency of conflicts, the experiences students and teachers had of being threatened, the locations of conflicts, how conflicts were resolved, and the perceived effectiveness of the Conflict Resolution Progam.. Thirty-seven tables and 15 figures present data and statistical analysis. Two appendices present an overview of interviews with secondary and elementary program facilitator and copies of research instruments. (TS)

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SAFETY AND SECURITY/CONFLICT RESOLUTION: ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE TORONTO BOARD, 1995

May 1996

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Executive Summary

Background

Since the 1992-93 school year, the Conflict Resolution Advisory Team has been involved with establishing and maintaining Conflict Resolution programs at Toronto Board elementary and secondary schools. Research and Assessment was requested to support the Advisory Team in an evaluation of the programs in 1995 (previous joint evaluations had been conducted in 1993 and 1994). Research, which was conducted between March and June 1995, had the following components:

1. student questionnaire to Grade 4-8 homerooms in nine participating elementary schools with Conflict Resolution programs (912 elementary student questionnaires were completed);
2. teacher questionnaire to teachers in the elementary schools (96 elementary teacher questionnaires were completed);
3. secondary student questionnaire to 17 randomly selected homerooms in secondary schools with Conflict Resolution programs (269 secondary student questionnaires were completed);
4. secondary teacher questionnaire to randomly selected teachers in secondary schools with Conflict Resolution programs (74 secondary teacher questionnaires were completed);
5. questionnaires sent out to a random selection of teachers who had participated in Conflict Resolution workshops between 1992 and 1995 (154 questionnaires were completed);
6. telephone interviews with facilitators of Conflict Resolution programs (interviews with facilitators of 36 elementary and secondary schools were completed).

FINDINGS

School Climate

Previous elementary and secondary panel surveys had found that while teachers and students had, on the whole, positive attitudes about the school they attended, teachers were more positive than were students. This pattern was confirmed in the 1995 survey. Among all survey participants, there was more agreement than disagreement in responses to school climate statements, but elementary and secondary teachers were more likely than elementary and secondary students to agree with positive statements, and to disagree with negative statements. As in previous studies, sometimes the contrasts were striking:

- 80% of elementary teachers, and 80% of secondary teachers, thought that students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at the school, while 54% of elementary students and 43% of secondary students thought this.
- 92% of elementary teachers, and 89% of secondary teachers, agreed that teachers in the school treat students fairly, while 62% of elementary students and 53% of secondary students thought this.
- 65% of elementary teachers, and 55% of secondary teachers, agreed that students follow the school rules, compared to 31% of elementary students and 28% of secondary students.

While there are exceptions, elementary teacher responses to school climate statements are often closer to secondary teacher responses than they are to elementary student responses; likewise, secondary teacher responses often have more similarity to elementary teacher responses than they do to secondary student responses.

Feelings of Safety in the School

The majority of elementary and secondary students and teachers felt safe in their school or school grounds, a finding that reinforces previous Toronto and GTA safety surveys. Furthermore, secondary students and both elementary and secondary teachers felt safer on school grounds than outside school grounds (this was particularly noticeable in the case of female secondary students). Both elementary and secondary teachers appeared to feel safer than did students.

Students Talking to Adults and Others if They Had A Problem

Both elementary and secondary teachers have repeatedly indicated that they believe it is important for students to talk to someone (preferably an adult) if they had a problem. This is reflected in the fact that

most elementary and secondary teachers in the 1995 survey thought that, in their school, most students are encouraged to talk to an adult in the school if they had a problem. However, 58% of elementary students in the survey said they would talk to a friend in the school if they had a problem, compared to less than half (46%) who would talk to an adult in the school if they had a problem-- a finding which fits with previous research. Fortunately, given that 71% of elementary students would talk to either a friend *or* an adult if they had a problem, most elementary students therefore had means of communicating with others. In the secondary level, less than half (44%) of students said they would talk to an adult in the school if they had a problem.

Elementary students were also asked if they had talked to an adult when they felt threatened by conflict or fighting. Results were mixed: 43% said they would, 44% said they would not, and 13% did not answer. These factors are also related: students who felt comfortable talking to friends or adults if they had a problem, were also most likely to have told an adult if they felt threatened.

Types of Conflicts Observed

Elementary teachers, and secondary teachers and secondary students, were asked what types of conflicts they observed. The most frequently observed conflicts were about rumour and gossip; the least frequently observed were physical conflict with weapons. These findings are similar to the 1993 secondary survey. A related question was given to elementary students, who were asked which types of conflict they had experienced since the March Break (out of pushing, hitting, threats, weapons, and name-calling). Elementary students were most likely to have experienced name-calling, and least likely to have experienced conflict with weapons.

Secondary teachers observed fewer types of conflict than secondary students; this fits with previous research, which has demonstrated that most school conflict takes place out of sight of teachers-- therefore teachers would observe fewer conflicts, on the whole, than students. Elementary teachers observed more types of conflict than secondary teachers.

Frequency of Conflict

Most (62%) secondary students said they had not been involved in any conflict over a six-month period, findings that are similar to the 1993 study. Previous focus group research which discussed this concluded that students responding to this question were probably thinking only of physical conflict. In the 1995 study, elementary and secondary teachers were also asked about their involvement in conflict. ("Involvement" includes both active participation, and intervention, in conflict.) Results indicate that:

- secondary school teachers were involved in more conflicts than secondary school students (50% of secondary school teachers were involved in at least one conflict, compared to 32% of secondary students);
- elementary school teachers were involved in more conflicts than secondary school teachers (80% of elementary school teachers were involved in at least one conflict).

Judging from responses to other questions, most teacher involvement took the form of responding to already existing student conflict. It is interesting that while secondary teachers had *observed* fewer conflicts than their students, they were *involved* in more conflicts than their students. This may be because while teachers are out of sight of much conflict that takes place in the school, they are the first line of containment once the conflict has escalated to a certain level. As there are far fewer teachers than there are students, the average teacher is going to be involved in more conflicts because of his/her role in containment, although the average student may observe more conflict going on.

Experience of Being Threatened

Elementary teachers, and secondary teachers and students, were asked if their safety was threatened by different types of conflict. Secondary and elementary teachers were much less likely to feel threatened than secondary students, regardless of types of conflict. In regards to specific types of conflict,

elementary teachers were more likely to feel threatened by pushing; secondary students and teachers were more threatened by namecalling and weapons.

Location of Conflict

Elementary students and teachers both agreed that the majority of school conflict took place not in the school building, but outdoors (which would explain why elementary students felt less safe in the school yard than in the school building itself). There was a split between secondary teachers and students in where they perceived school conflicts to take place, which was similar to 1993 survey findings: secondary students thought most conflicts took place outdoors, while secondary teachers thought most school conflicts took place in a school hall or other indoor place. Secondary school focus groups conducted in 1994 suggested that this was because most conflict took place outdoors or away from teachers.

Resolution of Conflict

As in the 1993 secondary survey, there was a pronounced difference in how secondary panel teachers and students thought that conflicts are resolved. Secondary teachers were more likely to say that school conflicts are resolved when a staff member mediates, while secondary students are more likely to think that conflict is worked out in a variety of ways. Previous 1994 focus group research has indicated this may be because of differing definitions over such terms as "mediation", and "arbitration". However, elementary teachers in the 1995 survey indicated that they, like secondary students, thought conflicts tended to be solved in a variety of ways. It may be worth investigating elementary and secondary teacher perception of conflict resolutions in more detail, to see if possible differences in their strategies to conflict do exist.

The Conflict Resolution Program

Most students and teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels are in favour of conflict resolution, at least in general principle. In terms of implementation, there are considerable differences between the elementary and secondary panels. A higher proportion of elementary teachers and students appear to have taken conflict resolution training, and elementary teachers were more likely to have integrated conflict resolution into classroom teaching. However, more secondary school teachers were aware of the program than were elementary school teachers. Also, considering the challenges of introducing non-subject related material into the secondary school curriculum, the fact that a quarter of the secondary teachers were integrating some aspect of Conflict Resolution into their curriculum is quite impressive.

Most elementary and secondary teachers thought that they themselves were able to resolve personal or professional conflicts in a positive way. However, they thought that, in general, school programs would benefit if school staff had more training in Conflict Resolution. This may be a legitimate observation; it may also be in some cases an indication of a 'blind spot' on the part of teacher self-reporting.

Students who had taken Conflict Resolution training-- 22% of elementary students and 10% of secondary students-- were positive about the training (although the secondary students were more positive than the elementary students). For example, 72% of elementary student mediators thought the process allowed them to help other students, and 85% of secondary mediators thought they were able to help family and friends. However, both elementary and secondary mediators were less certain about their impact on the school, and on other students' support for the program. Thus, although mediators were themselves convinced of the effectiveness of the process, their responses indicate that other students remained unconvinced. There is limited evidence that support for Conflict Resolution at the secondary level may have declined (the proportion of secondary level students and teachers who agreed that it is important to teach conflict resolution skills has fallen, although a majority still hold this view).

Elementary and secondary teachers who had attended Conflict Resolution workshops over a three year period were also sent a questionnaire requesting their opinions about the effectiveness and usefulness of the program. Most participants said they could still remember at least a fair amount from the workshop activities, even those who had attended workshops two or more years earlier. Participants were quite favourable towards their experience-- echoing the positive experience of students who had taken Conflict Resolution training. Participants agreed that teachers, administrators, students and parents would benefit from the training, and that Conflict Resolution skills were essential life skills (although female teachers thought this more strongly than did male teachers).

On the whole, teachers who attended these workshops found them moderately useful, and thought the workshops had some but not enormous impact on their teaching (again, female teachers were more likely to find the workshops useful than were male teachers). A majority of workshop participants applied at least some of the skills and information they learned; the information and skills were most effectively applied in teachers' relations to students. Participants teaching in elementary schools were more likely to apply the skills and information than participants teaching in secondary schools-- which relates to the above teacher survey findings, showing integration of Conflict Resolution into teaching curriculum at the elementary level to be more extensive than at the secondary level.

It was notable that the workshop participants came up with a list of over 30 programs or initiatives that Conflict Resolution skills are connected with or supporting-- from Transition Years mentoring programs to elementary level anti-Bullying initiatives. The potential of the Conflict Resolution program appears to be considerable; certainly, those who have participated in training are positive towards the program. The application of the program at this time has yet to achieve this potential, despite the fact that Conflict Resolution is perceived by students and teachers in a positive way. Considering the well-known challenges in achieving any sort of educational change, such modest effectiveness should not be undervalued. Still, effective implementation is a challenge that educators will have to address, as the Conflict Resolution principles and practices become integrated components of the school community.

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Introduction

What is Conflict Resolution?

- Conflict is a fight, struggle, battle, disagreement, dispute or quarrel. (World Book Dictionary). A conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur. It is, however, a natural and normal feature of human interaction and can lead to growth, progress and change.

- Conflict Resolution is a process which structures a conflict in order to maximize the positive, constructive potential of conflict and prevent and/or minimize its negative, destructive effects. Conflict Resolution is not an attempt to eliminate conflict; rather, it is a process for approaching conflict and managing it to achieve maximum benefit for all.

- The concept of Conflict Resolution "program" in schools is, in itself, a misnomer. There does not exist in our schools, one generic program which embraces all aspects of "Conflict Resolution". Instead, program refers to the multi-dimensional plans, activities, and strategies which are implemented in our schools to create more peaceful learning communities and to teach crucial life skills for resolving conflicts. These could include:

  - the integration of conflict resolution and conflict study into curriculum;

  - professional development opportunities for staff and parents;

  - the application of the principles and processes of Conflict Resolution into professional practice in all facets of the school's institutional structure, for example, co-curricular and extra curricular activities, school discipline and classroom management practices, school policies and procedures, and, the format of staff, student and parent meetings;

  - the development and maintenance of alternative dispute resolution processes such as those used in Peer Mediation and Peacemaker programs.

- Conflict Resolution in school rests on a foundation of principles and a belief that people of any age can acquire skills and understandings that will help them to deal with conflicts in constructive ways. The principled approach - nonadversarial, problem solving, interest focused, dialogue based, and change oriented - differs from traditional approaches aimed at assigning blame and controlling behaviour and which assume that one person must win and the other will lose in a conflict, or that both must give up something.

- Conflict Resolution is not solely intended as a type of discipline, i.e. to stop fighting or control behaviour. It is, as well, intended to provide staff and students with a repertoire of skills and to nurture new ways of thinking about dealing with differences and conflict. (Educators for Social Responsibility, 1994).

Background

Conflict Resolution pilot "programs"[1] at both the elementary and secondary levels were established at a number of schools during the 1991-92 school year. At the conclusion of the pilot phase in June 1992, the Board passed a resolution establishing Conflict Resolution for three years, from September 1992 until June 1995. In June 1995, the initiative was extended for another year.

Research and Assessment and the Conflict Resolution Advisory Team have been involved in research on the program since Year 1:

- Research and Assessment assisted the Conflict Resolution Advisory Team in administering and analyzing questionnaires given to students, student conflict mediators, and administrators in nine secondary schools participating in the Conflict Resolution Program, in May and June 1993;

- Focus groups were conducted at two secondary schools in May 1994 to enrich analysis of the survey data from Year 1, to get a sense of what people in schools think and feel about conflict resolution, and to get more detailed information about the implementation process in the school. For each school, there were at least two focus groups of students and two groups of teachers

- A survey for teachers and students in ten elementary schools with Conflict Resolution programs was conducted in Winter 1994.

Detailed findings of the research can be found in Brown et al., 1995b, Research Report #210 (secondary schools) and Yau et al., 1995, Research Report #212 (elementary schools).

1995 Evaluation

The 1995 evaluation was jointly conducted by the Conflict Resolution Advisory Team, and Research and Assessment. Research was conducted between March and June 1995. It had the following components:

Elementary Panel

The methodology of the elementary panel was the same used in the 1994 evaluation. Schools with active Conflict Resolution programs were asked if they would like to participate. Those that agreed could administer the questionnaire to any homerooms, providing that at least one homeroom from each grade (Grades 4-6 for junior schools, Grades 4-8 for junior-senior schools) was selected. Teachers in participating schools were also sent a questionnaire.

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[1] For the purposes of the report, "program" refers to the multi-dimensional plans, activities, and strategies which are implement in our schools to create more peaceful learning communities and to teach crucial life skills for resolving conflicts.

Principals of participating schools distributed both student and teacher questionnaires, and returned the completed questionnaires to Research and Assessment (May-June 1995).[2]

Secondary Panel

Teacher Questionnaire

This questionnaire was sent to a random sample of teachers in schools with active Conflict Resolution Programs (May-June 1995).

Student Questionnaires

A number of homerooms (Grade 9 to OAC) in schools with active Conflict Resolution Programs were randomly selected. The teachers of those homerooms then administered the questionnaires in the homeroom. (May-June 1995).[3]

Workshop Participants Questionnaire

A sample of teachers who had participated in *Introduction to Conflict Resolution*, *Conflict Mediation*, and *Anger Management* Workshops between 1992 and 1995 were randomly selected, and sent a questionnaire asking their opinions about the effectiveness and usefulness of the workshops (May-June 1995).

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[2] Principals from participating schools were given their student questionnaire results, and the total questionnaire results for all elementary students, in October 1995.

[3] Teachers from participating homerooms were given the secondary student questionnaire results for their homeroom, and the total for all secondary students, in October 1995.

Elementary Panel– Student and Teacher Questionnaires

A. Sample Description

i. Students

Out of the nine schools with Conflict Resolution programs that agreed to participate, 47 homerooms participated (for a total of 912 students). This is 43% of all Grade 4-8 classes in the nine schools. It is quite probable that a majority of homerooms that were selected at the school did participate (since it was only requested that a minimum of one class from each grade per school be involved). For the most part, the demographic description of the sample appears to be similar to the demographic description of these schools as available from student records. Note, however, that the proportion of Grade 7-8 students is somewhat lower than the grade distribution of the schools as available through student records, and is distinctly lower than the overall population of Toronto elementary schools. This is because no senior schools (i.e., schools that are entirely Grades 7-8 in their student population) were selected.

Table 1: Student Demographics

Grade	%
Grade 4	28.2
Grade 5	27.0
Grade 6	28.2
Grade 7	9.7
Grade 8	6.9

Gender	%
female	49.2
male	50.8

ii. Teachers

Ninety-six completed teacher questionnaires were returned from the nine participating schools, a return rate of 43%. Please note that this is probably a slight underestimate of the 'true' return rate, since it assumes that all teachers in the schools were given the questionnaire, and does not exclude teachers on leave of absence or otherwise not present when the questionnaire was in the field. From the grades taught and gender breakdown, the sample appears to be similar to that of Toronto teaching staff in those schools.[4]

Table 2: Teacher Demographics

Grades taught	%
JK	13.5
Kindergarten	16.7
Grade 1	30.2
Grade 2	27.1
Grade 3	30.2
Grade 4	28.1
Grade 5	35.4
Grade 6	30.2
Grade 7	12.5
Grade 8	11.5
Special Education	15.6

Gender	%
female	79.2
male	20.8

[4] In all Toronto Board elementary schools for 1994-95, 74% of teachers were female and 26% were male.

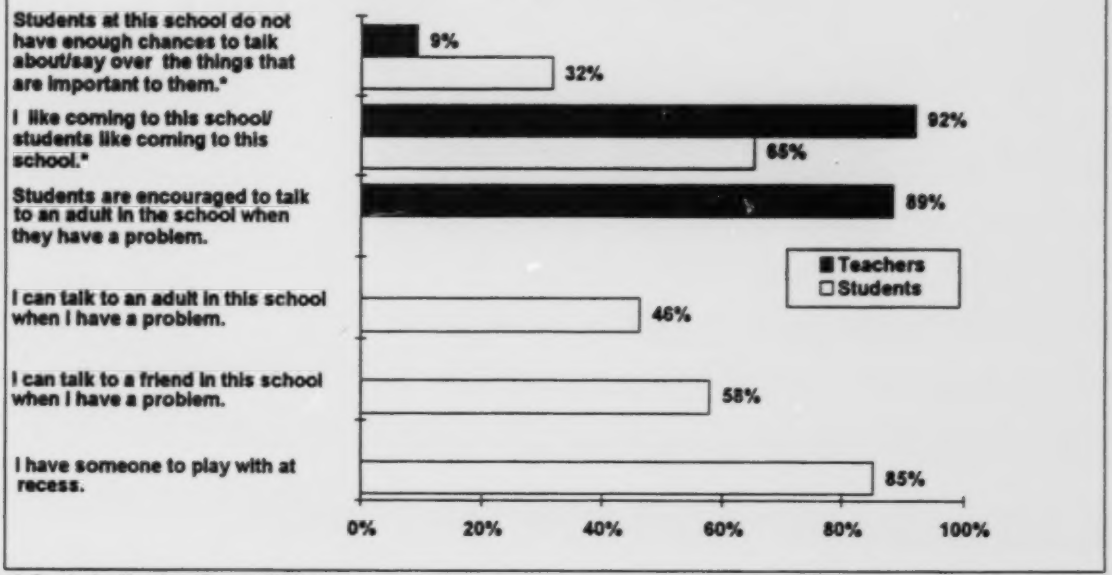
B. School Atmosphere

Most students said they liked coming to school, and most teachers thought that students liked coming to their school, but the difference in agreement (65% of students, 92% teachers) indicates a trend seen in previous studies, and in other parts of this study: when they are asked the same questions, students and teachers tend to hold generally similar views, but that there tends to be substantial differences in the extent of their agreement.[5]

The majority of elementary teachers (89%) agreed that students in the school are encouraged to talk to an adult when they have a problem. Students may not be taking full advantage of this encouragement: 46% of respondents said they could talk to an adult in the school when they had a problem, while 58% said they could talk to a friend when they had a problem.[6] However, when responses to the two questions are combined, 71% of students said they could talk to someone (adult or student) in the school when they had a problem. Girls were significantly more likely to talk to a friend when they had a problem than were boys (see Figure 2).

For School Atmosphere questions at the secondary level, see Figure 8.

Figure 1: School Atmosphere– Elementary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)

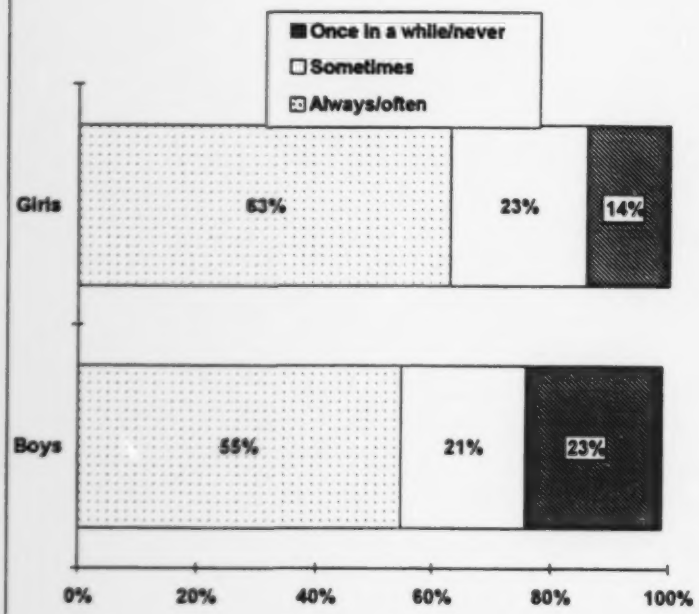

Students at this school do not have enough chances to talk about/say over the things that are important to them.*
9%
32%
I like coming to this school/ students like coming to this school.*
92%
65%
Students are encouraged to talk to an adult in the school when they have a problem.
89%
Teachers
Students
I can talk to an adult in this school when I have a problem.
46%
I can talk to a friend in this school when I have a problem.
58%
I have someone to play with at recess.
85%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%

* Statistically significant difference.

[5] Out of 16 identical or similar questions answered by elementary teachers and elementary students, 15 had statistically significant differences using chi-square tests.

[6] Several secondary school studies have indicated that students are more likely to talk to their friends when they have a problem than they are to talk to anyone else, so these findings should not be considered surprising. See, for example, Hale et al., **Needs Assessment at Central High School of Commerce: A Survey of Student Concerns**, Student Support Services Bulletin No. 30, October 1991.

Figure 2:
Students Who Can Talk To a Friend When They Have a Problem



C. Respect, Fairness, and Conflict in the School

For most questions related to respect, fairness, tension, and conflict in the school, the difference between student and teacher responses remains quite wide (between 10% and 34%). For example, 92% of elementary teachers and 62% of students agreed that teachers treat students fairly; 80% of teachers and 54% of students agreed that most students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at the school. Interestingly, the differences between elementary teachers and students are quite similar to those found among secondary students and teachers (for data from the elementary panel, see Figures 3 and 4; for data from the secondary panel, see Figures 9 and 10).

Overall, students and teachers **agreed** that:

- Teachers in the school treat students fairly (92% of teachers, 62% of students);
- Teachers in the school show respect for students (90% of teachers, 69% of students);
- School rules are clear and fair (73% of teachers, 63% of students);
- Teachers are good at keeping arguments between students from turning into fights (78% of teachers, 60% of students);
- Most students and teachers solve their problems peacefully in the school (80% of teachers, 54% of students).

Overall, most teachers or students **did not agree** that

- there is usually tension among the students at the school (i.e., 12% of teachers and 28% of students agreed that there was often or always tension in the school; conversely, 85% of teachers and 69% of students thought there was never, once in a while, or sometimes tension among students at the school);
- there is usually tension among the teachers and some students at the school (i.e., 12% of teachers and 23% of students agreed that there was often or always tension among the teachers and some students; conversely, 81% of teachers and 73% of students thought there was never, once in a while or sometimes tension among the teachers and some students).

Teachers were much more likely than students to agree that:

- Students in the school show respect for teachers (68% of teachers, 40% of students);
- Students in the school show respect for each other; (58% of teachers, 39% of students);
- Students follow the school rules (65% of teachers, 31% of students);
- Students in the school know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight (51% of teachers, 24% of students).

Students were much more likely than teachers to agree that:

- Racial incidents happen at the school (16% of teachers, 50% of students);
- Older children pick on younger ones (4% of teachers, 43% of students).
- Students in the school think first and fight second (23% of teachers, 47% of students).

Figure 3: Respect and Fairness- Elementary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)

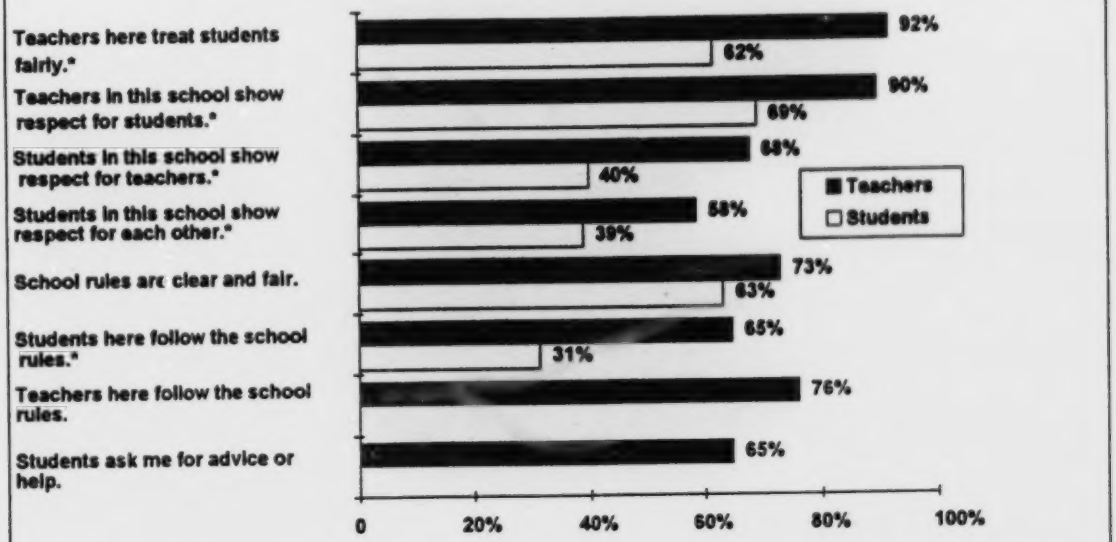
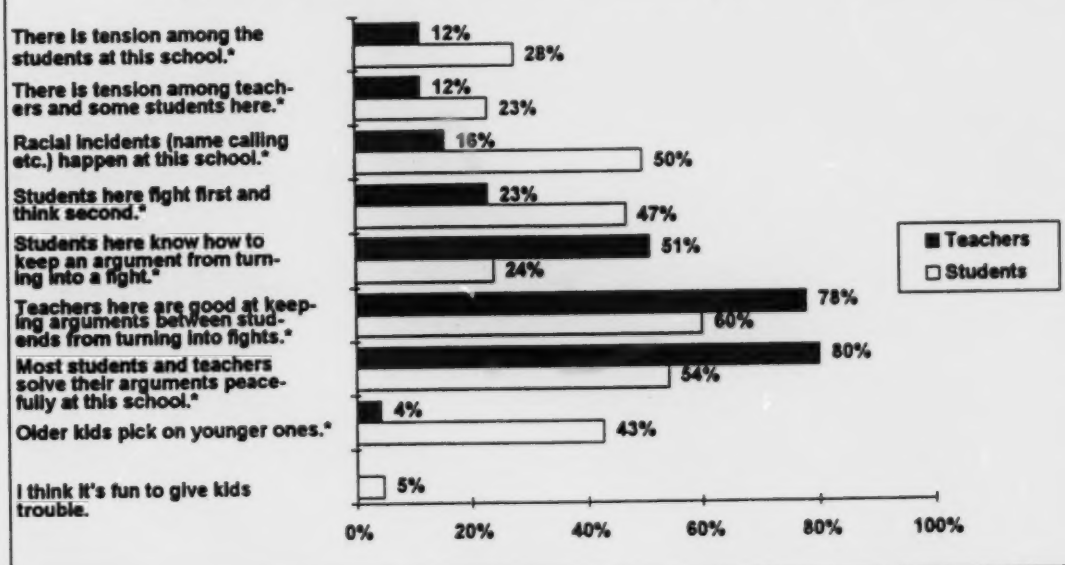


Figure 4: Tension and Conflict in the School-- Elementary Schools



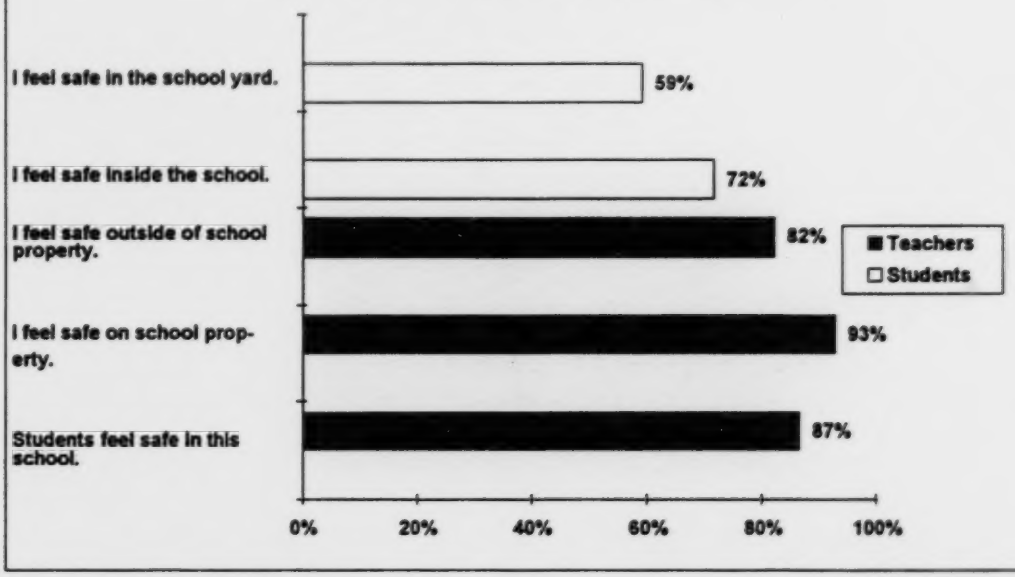
* Statistically significant difference.

D. School Safety

Earlier studies (see Lecoupe, 1995) had indicated that most teachers and students felt safe in their school, and this was confirmed in 1995 elementary panel findings. Elementary teachers tended to feel safer on school property than they felt outside of school property (93% felt safe on school property, 82% felt safe outside school property). Most elementary teachers (87%) also believed their students felt safe in the school.

Likewise, 72% of students agreed they felt safe inside the school, while 59% said they felt safe in the school yard. The difference is understandable considering that (as will be shown below) the vast majority of school conflict takes place outdoors.

Figure 5: School Safety-- Elementary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)



There were no significant differences between boys and girls, or between grades, on how safe elementary students felt in their school. Nor were there significant differences between boys and girls in how safe they felt in the school yard. There was a difference between grade and feelings of safety in the school yard: students in Grade 4-5 had the highest proportion of students who felt unsafe, while Grade 8 students were most likely to feel safe in the school yard. Although one plausible explanation is difference is size between grades (Grade 8 students, being older, are as a rule the physically largest elementary school cohort, and hence less likely to feel physically intimidated in the school yard) this is something that deserves further study.

E. Types of Conflict Observed at School

Elementary teachers were asked what type of conflict and how many conflicts they had observed over a period of approximately five months (from January 1995 until late May or early June 1995). The most frequently observed type of conflict was verbal dispute about rumour and gossip (81% observed one or more conflict) and verbal dispute about property issues (74% observed one or more conflict). The least frequently observed type of conflict was fighting with weapons (although even in that case, nearly a fifth of elementary teachers observed one or more fights with weapons).[7]

Table 3: Types of Conflict That Happen At School

3.1: Verbal disputes about rumour and gossip

Frequency	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	8.3
1-3 conflicts	28.1
4-6 conflicts	25.0
7 or more conflicts	28.1

3.2: Verbal disputes about property issues

Frequency	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	14.6
1-3 conflicts	30.2
4-6 conflicts	17.7
7 or more conflicts	26.0

3.3: Verbal disputes about gender relations

Frequency	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	21.9
1-3 conflicts	41.7
4-6 conflicts	12.5
7 or more conflicts	13.5

3.4: Verbal disputes about race-racial issues

Frequency	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	29.2
1-3 conflicts	38.5
4-6 conflicts	12.5
7 or more conflicts	9.4

3.5: Physical Fights Without Weapons

Frequency	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	22.9
1-3 conflicts	42.7
4-6 conflicts	13.5
7 or more conflicts	15.6

3.6: Physical Fights With Weapons

Frequency	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	76.0
1-3 conflicts	13.5
4-6 conflicts	2.1
7 or more conflicts	2.1

[7] It is important to remember, however, that "weapons" in the elementary context could include sticks, hockey sticks, rulers, etc.

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F. Experience of Conflict

Teachers and students were asked somewhat different questions about conflict they had experienced.[8] Teachers were asked if they felt that the type of conflict threatened their safety, while students were asked if they had experienced the type of conflict since the March Break (2-3 months earlier). A comparatively small proportion of teachers (0-3%) frequently (i.e. always or often) felt threatened by the types of conflict (no teacher frequently felt threatened by weapons). Students most often experienced namecalling (46%) and least often experienced conflict involving weapons (4%).

Table 4: Experience of Conflict

Elementary Students: % of sample who said they always or often experienced the type of conflict since the March break;
Elementary Teachers: % of sample who felt the type of conflict always or often threatened their personal safety at school or on school grounds[9]

School Location	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
Namecalling	46.2	2.1
Pushing	20.5	3.1
Hitting	16.4	2.1
Threats	15.0	2.1
Weapons	3.6	0

In all types of conflict experienced by elementary students, boy students were more likely to experience conflict than were girl students.[10]

Table 5:
Type of Conflict Experienced by Elementary School Students

Type of Conflict	MALES			FEMALES		
	Never	Once in a while/ some-times	Often or always	Never	Once in a while/ some-times	Often or always
Namecalling *	6.5	42.5	51.0	12.8	45.4	41.7
Pushing*	16.5	57.7	25.8	27.8	56.9	15.4
Hitting*	27.1	52.2	20.6	46.9	40.9	12.2
Threats*	35.9	45.7	18.4	53.8	34.7	11.5
Weapons*	75.8	19.9	4.3	84.1	12.9	3.0

* Statistically significant difference.

[8] This set of questions was based on one asked in a school questionnaire conducted at West Toronto; variations were given to teachers and students in the elementary and secondary panels. The set of questions was inserted to supplement those given to elementary teachers in Table 3, because it was thought that the questions in Table 3 were too sophisticated for students in the Grade 4-8 level.
[9] Because these questions were different, tests of significance were not conducted.
[10] The gender difference is interesting considering that there was no difference between boy and girl students in their feelings of safety in the school and on school grounds. Thus, boy students may *experience* more conflict than girl students, yet somehow they end up with similar general perceptions of school safety. This is an area where more detailed qualitative research might shed some light.

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G. Frequency of Participation in Conflict

Elementary teachers were also asked how many conflicts with students they personally had been involved with over a five month period. Most teachers (80%) had been involved in at least one conflict during this time (usually between 1 and 6 conflicts), while 18% had not been involved in any conflicts over that time. "Involvement" could include having a conflict, or intervening in a conflict; judging from Tables 7, 8 and 9, most teacher involvement tended to take the form of responding to student conflict that had already developed. This same pattern can be seen in secondary teacher responses (see Tables 22-24).

Table 6: Frequency of Conflict

(How many conflicts with students has teacher been involved in since January 95)

Number of conflicts	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	17.7
1-3 conflicts	42.7
4-6 conflicts	13.5
7-15 conflicts	11.5
Over 15 conflicts	12.5

H. Involvement in School Conflict

Nearly all teachers (98%) thought that students were typically involved in elementary school conflict; 16% thought the staff were involved; and 7% thought intruders from outside the school were involved.

Table 7: Involvement in School Conflict
(% of sample who said the following were typically involved in conflict at school)

Who is involved	Teachers (%)
Students	97.9
Staff	15.6
Intruders	7.3
Gangs	2.1

I. Response to Conflict

Nearly all teachers (98%) thought that teachers usually respond to elementary school conflict, and two thirds (66%) although thought that the school administration responds to conflict. As well, a majority (58%) thought that elementary students respond to conflicts when they develop.

Table 8: Response to Conflict
(% of sample who said the following usually responded to conflict at school)

Who Responds	Teachers (%)
Teachers	97.9
Administration	65.6
Students	58.3
Police	12.5
No one	1.0

J. How Conflicts are Resolved in Elementary Schools

Elementary teachers thought that school conflicts are solved in a variety of ways. Most (88%) thought that the conflicts are resolved when a staff member mediates; two thirds (64%) thought that a student, peer or friend will end the conflict by mediating it; less than half (48%) thought the conflict ends when a staff member arbitrates by choosing a solution. Most (71%) also thought that people in conflict usually work it out themselves. Very few teachers (5%) believed that conflicts are not usually resolved. It should be noted that the interpretation of the terms "mediation" and "arbitration" were not defined for this questionnaire, and therefore responses reflect what people think these terms mean, rather than exact procedure (see Table 25 for secondary student and teacher responses, and the Summary Discussion for more on this issue).

Table 9: How Conflicts Are Resolved at School
(% of sample who said the following strategies usually resolve conflict at school)

How Conflicts Solved	Teachers (%)
Staff member mediates	87.5
People in conflict work it out themselves	70.8
Student/friend/peer mediates	63.5
Staff member chooses solution	47.9
Conflicts not usually resolved	5.2

K. Location of Conflict

Although elementary teachers and students were given slightly different questions about where school conflict would take place, the answers tended to be similar. The school outdoors (school yard/playground) was the most frequent location (94% of teachers, 91% of students); the classroom was a distinct secondary location (38% of teachers, 39% of students). Other school indoor space (e.g. the gym and the lockers) accounted for between 30-40% of conflict, while the cafeteria and washroom accounted for about a quarter of conflict locations.

Table 10: Location of Conflict
(% of sample who said the following locations were where conflicts usually happen at school)

School Location	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
Outdoors/school yard/playground	90.9	93.8
Classroom	39.3	37.5
Indoor space (teachers)		38.5
Indoor-- Gym (students)	21.3	
Indoor- At the lockers (students)	13.3	
Cafeteria/lunchroom	23.6	25.0
Washroom	22.6	24.0

(There were no significant differences between student and teacher location of conflict.)

L. Telling An Adult if Students Felt Unsafe

Forty-three percent of students said that if they felt unsafe because of conflict or fighting, they told a teacher or an adult in the school; a slightly higher proportion (44%) said they did not tell an adult in the school, while 13% did not answer, indicating a certain unease or possible confusion about the question. Students who were more likely to talk to a friend or adult in the school if they had a problem, were also more likely to say that they told an adult if they felt unsafe due to conflict or fighting.

Table 11: Telling Adults If Unsafe

"If you felt unsafe because of conflict or fighting, have you told a teacher or an adult in your school about it?"

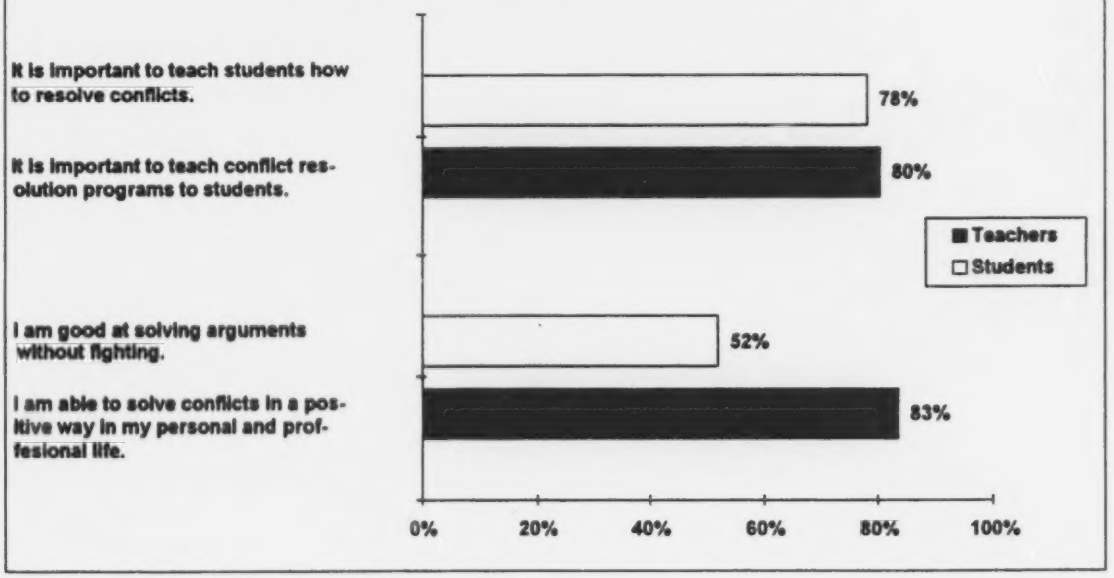
	Students (%)
YES	43.1
NO	44.1
Did not answer	12.8

M. Conflict Resolution in Elementary Schools

i. Overall Perception of Conflict Resolution

Both students and teachers agreed that it is important to teach students how to resolve conflicts. Over half of elementary students thought that they were good at solving arguments without fighting; likewise, most elementary teachers were also confident of their ability to solve conflict in a positive way, in their personal and their professional lives. Both male and female teachers had similar attitudes towards conflict resolution programs and solving conflicts.

Figure 6: Conflict Resolution Programs-- Elementary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)



ii. Extent of Teaching of Conflict Resolution

Most elementary teachers did not teach Conflict Resolution as a time-tabled part of their course (70% did not). However, the proportion who did teach Conflict Resolution is higher than in the 1994 study (30% compared to 18% in 1994).

Teachers were divided on whether their students would benefit if they themselves took more training in Conflict Resolution: 51% agreed, 49% did not agree or were unsure. However, most (60%) thought the school would benefit if school staff had more training in Conflict Resolution.

Although all the schools involved in the survey had Conflict Resolution programs, over a quarter (27%) of staff did not think these programs existed in their school, or were unsure whether such a program existed.

Of those who thought there was a program in the school, two thirds (67%) participated in staff training.

Table 12: Teaching of Conflict Resolution/Peacemakers in the Classroom

	YES (%)	NO (%)
Teach conflict resolution strategies as time-tabled part of course	30.1	69.9
Integrate conflict resolution strategies into program without time-tabling	93.7	6.3
Do you feel your students would benefit if YOU had more training in conflict resolution	51.0	49.0‡
Do you think your school programs would benefit if THE STAFF had more training in conflict resolution	60.4	39.6‡
Does your school have a conflict resolution, peer mediator, or peacemaker program	72.3	26.7‡
If program in school--Have you been involved in training the peer mediators/peacemakers	24.3	75.7
If program in school--Have you been involved in integrating conflict resolution/peer mediation/peacemaking into your curriculum	70.0	30.0
If program in school--Have you participated in staff conflict resolution/peer mediation training	67.1	32.9

‡Includes 'not sure'

iii. Conflict Resolution Activities in the Classroom

On the whole, there tended to be more similarities than differences in teachers' and students' perception of Conflict Resolution activities in the classroom.[11] When asked about classroom practices and activities, students and teachers indicated that teaching or fostering general principles about conflict resolution was common in class-- for example, learning that put-downs about race, religion, language or gender were not acceptable in the classroom. However, most students indicated that specific activities (such as writing stories about conflict) did not take place frequently. Teachers agreed with students that some specific activities did not often take place (writing stories about conflict, doing role-plays of conflict, and "Learning Circle/Magic Circle") but disagreed about: talking about conflicts and how to resolve them (66% of teachers thought this took place frequently, compared to 41% of students); reading stories where characters had conflicts (54% of teachers, 23% of students), and talking about feelings in the class (79% of teachers, 35% of students).

Table 13: Activities in the Classroom-- Student Perspective
(% of sample who said the following activities happened "always" or "often")

Activity	Students (%)
In our classroom we talk about conflicts people have and how they can resolve them	40.5
We sometimes do role-plays of conflicts in our class and try to resolve the problems	20.5
We read stories where the characters have conflicts with each other	22.8
In our classroom, we write stories about conflicts	9.5
We have Learning Circle/Magic Circle in our classrooms	16.2
We learn that people of difference races, religions and countries are equally important	73.1
We learn that boys and girls are equally important	78.2
We learn that put-downs about race, religion, language or gender aren't accepted in our classroom	78.8
We talk about feelings in our class.	34.8
I think most students in this classroom feel good about themselves.	60.1
Our teacher helps us to learn how to listen to each other	72.3
We do not allow "put-downs" in class	71.9

[11] However, please note that the difference between students and teachers was statistically significant in all cases where there were compatible statements about classroom activities.

Table 14: Activities in the Classroom-- Teacher Perspective
(% of sample who said the following activities happened "always" or "often")

Activity	Teacher (%)
In the classroom, we talk about conflicts people have and how to resolve them.	65.6
We role play conflict situations and how to resolve them.	22.9
In the curriculum, I deliberately include stories and books in which the characters have inter-personal conflicts	54.2
In our classroom, the students have been asked to write stories about conflicts.	21.9
We have Learning Circle/Magic Circle in our classroom.	28.1
In the classroom, the students learn that different races, religions and countries are equally important.	84.4
I teach my students that put-downs about race, religion, language or gender aren't tolerated in our classroom.	88.5
I include discussions about feelings and help children learn to articulate their feelings.	79.2
We have class meetings to discuss friendship and inter-personal behavior	44.8

iv. Perception of Conflict Resolution Effectiveness

There is general agreement among elementary students and teachers that Conflict Resolution programs are a good idea: for example, that it is a good idea for kids to learn how to be peacemakers (83% of teachers and 63% of students agreed). There appears to be a certain disagreement about how the programs have been implemented. Nearly two thirds of teachers believed that peacemakers do a good job at school; less than half of students felt this. Over three quarters of teachers agreed that the peacemaker program helps kids to work out disagreements; slightly less than half of students thought this (49%). Over half of students (57%) but little over a quarter of teachers (28%) agreed that when peacemakers try to help solve a conflict, it does not stay fixed (for more details, see Table 15).

On the other hand, the opinions and experiences of those who identified themselves as student peacemakers (197 students, or 22% of elementary student sample) tended to be quite favourable towards the program (see Table 16). In fact, peacemakers were statistically much more likely to believe in Conflict Resolution's effectiveness than were other elementary students. For example, 71% of peacemakers agreed that peacemaking programs help kids work out disagreements, compared to 48% of other students; 62% of peacemakers thought that peacemakers do a good job at school, compared to 39% of other students. (see Figure 7).

Table 15: Perception of Effectiveness of Peacemaker Programs
(% of sample who said the following activities happened "always" or "often")

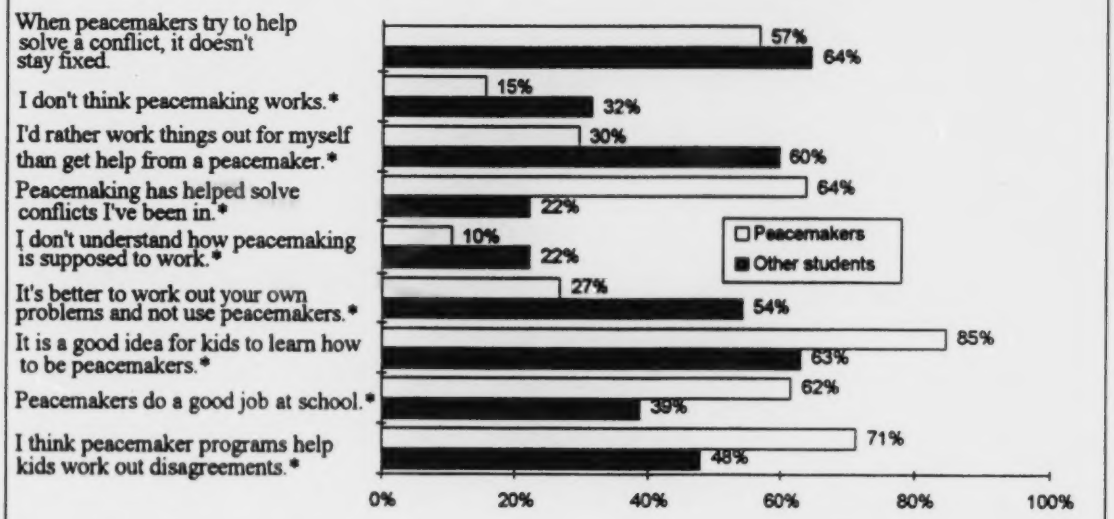
Activity	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
Peacemakers do a good job at school.*	41.2	63.5
I think peacemaker programs help kids work out disagreements.*	48.9	77.1
It is a good idea for kids to learn how to be peacemakers.	63.3	83.3
It's better for students to work out their own problems and not use peacemakers.*	42.2	32.3
I don't understand how the peacemaking process is supposed to work.*	17.5	7.3
Peacemaking has helped solved conflicts I've been in.*	29.5	45.8
I'd rather work things out for myself than get help from the peacemakers. (student only)	47.3	
I don't think peacemaking works.*	25.9	3.1
When peacemakers try to help solve a conflict, it doesn't stay fixed; the same kids may start fighting again soon.*	56.7	28.1

* Statistically significant difference.

Table 16: Opinions and Experience of Student Peacemakers (N = 197)
(% of sample who agreed with the following statements)

Activity	Peace-makers (%)
I have learned different ways of solving problems since I became a peacemaker.	85.8
I like being a peacemaker.	56.3
I have been able to help other kids by being a peacemaker.	71.6
I have helped my school be a better place.	56.3
Peacemaking has helped me solve my own problems better.	64.0
Being a peacemaker is hard.	33.0
A lot of kids won't pay attention to the peacemakers	55.3
I've been able to help students resolve most conflicts when I've tried.	70.1

Figure 7: Effectiveness of Peacemaker Programs: Peacemakers and Other Students
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)



* Statistically significant difference.

Secondary Panel-- Student and Teacher Questionnaires

A. Sample Description

i. Students

Out of the 10 secondary schools with Conflict Resolution, 17 homerooms (Grade 9 to OAC) were randomly selected. The homeroom teachers were contacted by Research and Assessment, and agreed to administer the questionnaires to their students. Students from all homerooms (269 secondary students) completed the questionnaires in late May-June 1995. The sample has close to an even distribution of all grades (which is what was intended) and an age and gender distribution approximate to the participating schools.

Table 17: Student Demographics

Grade	%
Grade 9	22.2
Grade 10	20.6
Grade 11	17.1
Grade 12	19.8
Grade 13-OAC	20.2

Age	%
14 years	7.1
15 yrs	16.2
16 yrs	10.4
17 yrs	15.4
18 yrs	23.2
19 yrs	14.5
20 or older	13.3

Gender	%
female	46.2
male	53.8

ii. Teachers

A random sample of teachers in the schools with Conflict Resolution programs were sent questionnaires in May 1995; 74 secondary school teachers (59% of the sample) completed and returned their questionnaires in late May-June 1995. Judging from gender and grades taught, the respondents appear representative of Toronto Board secondary teaching staff.[1]

Table 18: School Staff Demographics

Grades taught	%
Grade 9	51.4
Grade 10	55.4
Grade 11	55.4
Grade 12	54.1
Grade 13-OAC	44.6

Gender	%
female	41.1
male	58.9

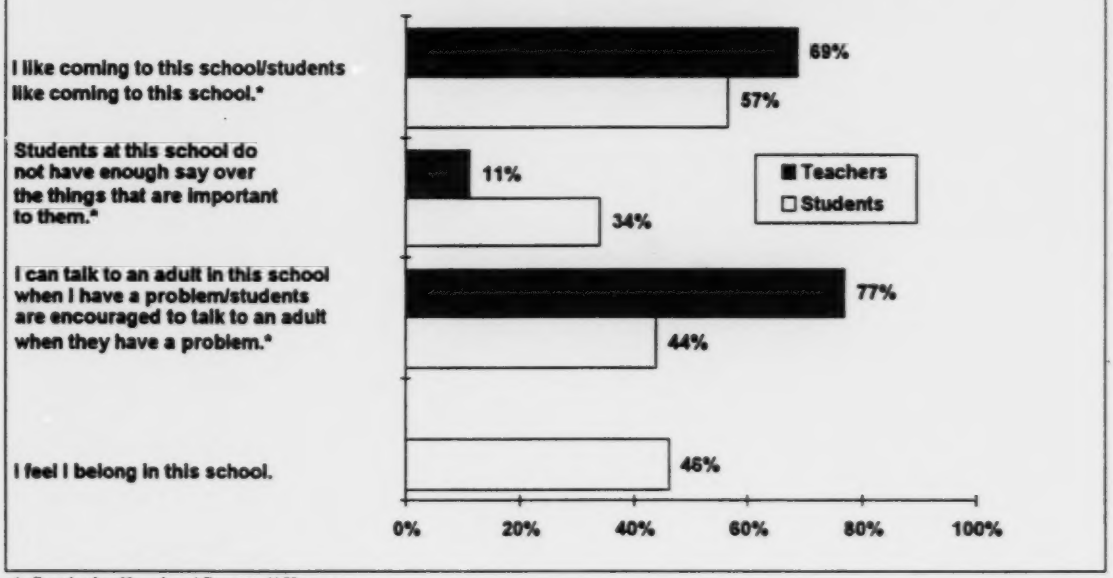
[1] In Toronto Board secondary schools, 48% of staff were female and 52% were male.

B. School Atmosphere

Both teachers and students agreed that students like coming to the school (69% of teachers, 57% of students).

Over three quarters of teachers (77%) thought that students are encouraged to talk to an adult in the school when they had a problem. However, as in the elementary panel results, less than half of the secondary students (44%) said that they could talk to an adult in the school when they had a problem. Somewhat less than half of the students felt they belonged in the school. This is lower than responses from a similar question in the 1991-92 Every Secondary Student Survey (73% of students in that survey agreed that they belonged in the school). The difference may be partly due to the timing of the 1995 questionnaire, which was completed towards the end of the school year (whereas the 1991-92 Every Secondary Student Survey was completed at the beginning of the school year).[2]

Figure 8: School Atmosphere-- Secondary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)


I like coming to this school/students like coming to this school.*
69%
57%
Students at this school do not have enough say over the things that are important to them.*
11%
34%
Teachers
Students
I can talk to an adult in this school when I have a problem/students are encouraged to talk to an adult when they have a problem.*
77%
44%
I feel I belong in this school.
46%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%

* Statistically significant difference.

[2] Previous evaluations involving student attitudes questions conducted at the beginning and the end of the school year (e.g. the Year 2 Study of Steps To University, Brown et al., 1995a) have found that students tend to be more negative at the end of the school year than at the beginning. Thus, the lower proportion of students agreeing with the statement in the 1995 study, as compared with the 1991-92 Every Secondary Student Survey, may be at least partly an artifact of asking the question in June rather than in early November (when the 1991-92 Every Secondary Student Survey was completed). Still, this deserves further study. See Brown et al., 1992; Brown et al., 1995a.

C. Respect, Fairness, and Conflict in the School

For most questions related to respect, fairness, and conflict in the school, the difference between student and teacher remains wide (with a few exceptions, 20% or more).[3] As noted earlier, the differences between secondary panel teachers and students are quite similar to the differences between elementary panel teachers and students. Overall, however, teachers and students held the same *general opinions* about most of these issues.

Overall, students and teachers **agreed** that:

- Teachers in the school treat students fairly (89% of teachers, 53% of students);
- Teachers in the school show respect for students (95% of teachers, 60% of students);
- Teachers in the school follow the school rules (85% of teachers, 57% of students).

Overall, most teachers or students **did not** agree that:

- There is usually tension among the students at the school (i.e., only 5% of teachers and 23% of students agreed that there is frequently tension among the students at the school);
- There is usually tension among teachers and some students at the school (i.e., 11% of teachers and 22% of students agreed that there is frequently tension among teachers and students);
- Incidents of sexism frequently happen at the school (12% of teachers and 15% of students thought this);
- Racial incidents frequently happen at the school (4% of teachers and 31% of students thought this);
- Students in the school fight first and think second (11% of teachers and 32% of students thought this);
- Students in the school know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight (31% of teachers and 24% of students thought this).

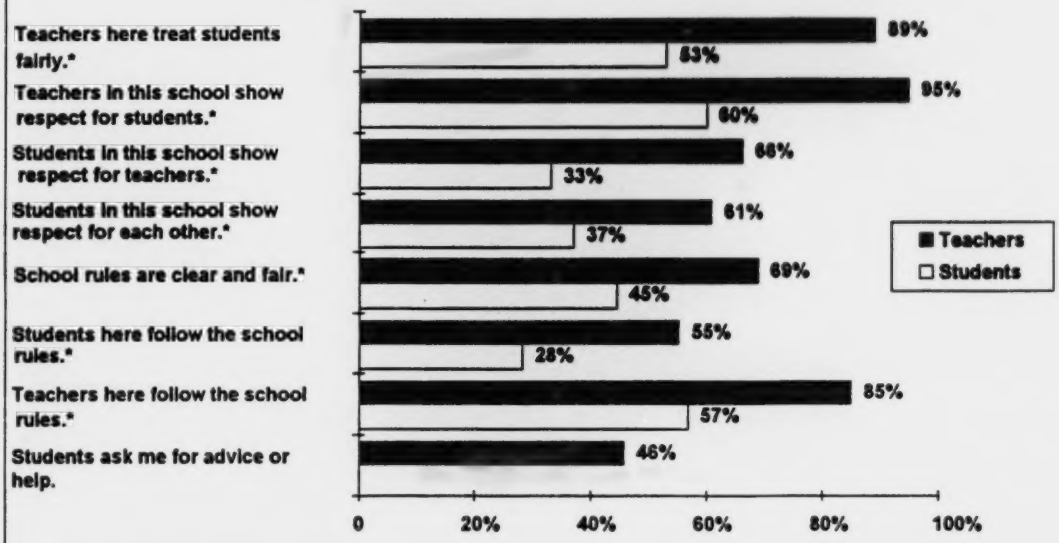
However, teachers were much more likely than students to agree that:

- Students in the school show respect for teachers (66% of teachers, 33% of students);
- Students in the school show respect for each other (61% of teachers, 37% of students);
- School rules are clear and fair (69% of teachers, 45% of students);
- Students follow the school rules (55% of teachers, 28% of students);
- Teachers at the school are good at keeping arguments between students from turning into fights (60% of teachers, 39% of students);
- Most students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at the school (80% of teachers, 43% of students).

For more details, see Figures 9 and 10. For data from the elementary panel, see Figures 3 and 4.

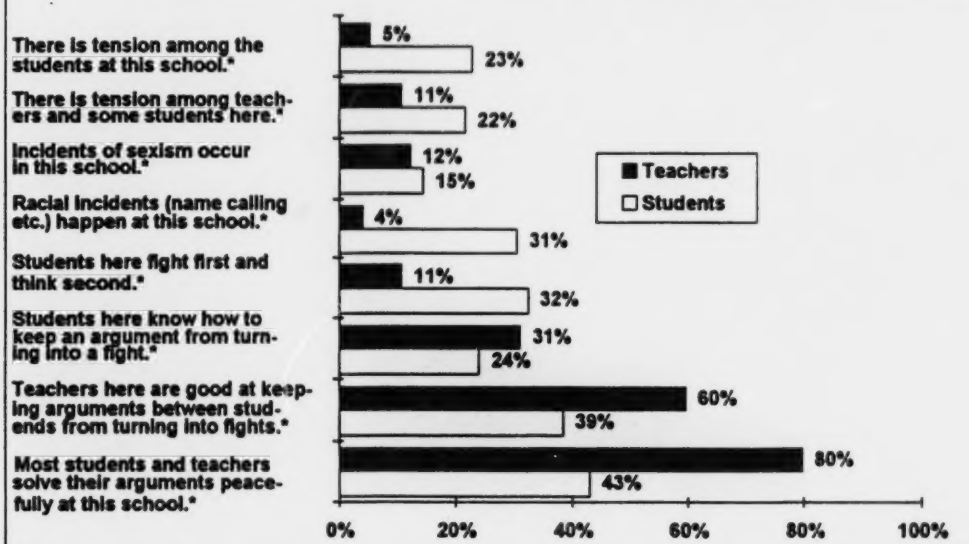
[3] There were 20 questions on school climate and feelings of safety that were answered by both secondary teachers and secondary students. In all 20 cases, there were significant differences between students and teachers.

Figure 9: Respect and Fairness- Secondary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)



* Statistically significant difference.

Figure 10: Tension and Conflict in the School-- Secondary Schools

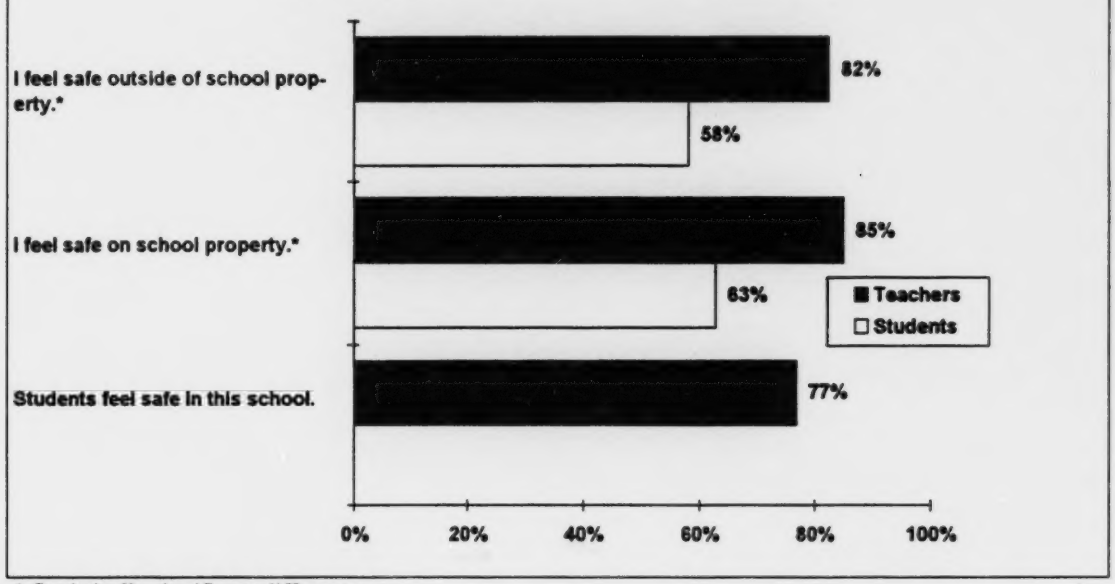


* Statistically significant difference.

D. School Safety

A majority of secondary teachers and students felt safe on school property, and outside of school property, although the proportion of teachers who thought this was higher than the proportion of students. Both teachers and students felt safer *on* school property than *outside* it. These findings are very similar to those of previous studies. In one 1991 study involving five Toronto Board secondary schools, 65% of students agreed that the school was a safe and secure place to learn. In a 1992 survey of students at Central Technical School, 68% agreed that the school felt safe to them,. In a 1994 survey conducted by the City of York Board, 73% of students and 80% of staff felt safe in their school (Lecoupe, 1995).

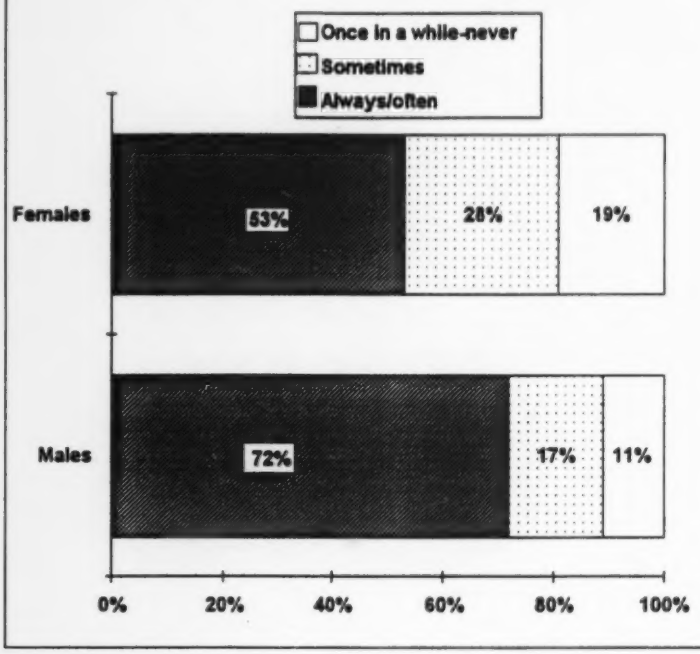
Figure 11: School Safety-- Secondary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)



* Statistically significant difference.

Female secondary students were just as likely as male students to feel safe on school grounds. However, they were much less likely to feel safe outside of school grounds than male students: only about half of female students (53%) always or often felt safe outside of school grounds, compared to 72% of male students (See Figure 12 below). Thus, for some female secondary students, the school and school grounds may represent an area of safety, compared to their world outside of school.

Figure 12:
Proportion of Secondary Students Who Feel Safe Outside of School Grounds, by Gender



On the other hand, there is a relationship between students' grade and feelings of safety while on school grounds. Judging from their answers, students in Grades 9-11 appear to feel less safe than those in senior grades (12-OAC). The pattern is similar in students' feelings of safety outside of school grounds, although the relationship approaches but is not significant ($p = .055$).

E. Types of Conflict Observed at School

Secondary students and teachers were asked about what types of how many conflicts they had observed since January of 1995 (a period of about 5 months). Verbal conflicts about rumour and gossip were the most frequently observed conflict; physical fights with weapons were the least frequently observed conflict (which was also the pattern found in the 1993 Conflict Resolution survey of secondary students and teachers). For all types of conflict, students tended to observe more incidents than teachers, and the differences were statistically significant, except for verbal disputes about property values, which approached significance. These differences are hardly surprising in the context of previous studies which found that most conflict involving students takes place out of the classroom, and usually out of sight of teachers (see, for example, Charach et al., 1995). Secondary teachers observed fewer incidents of all types of conflict, than did elementary teachers (for more detail of secondary panel conflict observation see Table 19 below; for more detail on elementary teacher conflict observation, see Table 3).

Table 19: Types of Conflict That Happen At School

19.1: Verbal disputes about rumour and gossip*

Frequency	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	11.5	17.6
1-3 conflicts	37.9	51.4
4-6 conflicts	14.5	13.5
7 or more conflicts	24.5	6.8

19.2: Verbal disputes about property issues

Frequency	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	21.2	29.7
1-3 conflicts	29.4	43.2
4-6 conflicts	13.4	16.2
7 or more conflicts	14.1	1.4

19.3: Verbal disputes about gender relations*

Frequency	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	24.2	27.0
1-3 conflicts	30.5	52.7
4-6 conflicts	13.8	8.1
7 or more conflicts	10.8	5.4

19.4: Verbal disputes about race-racial issues*

Frequency	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	26.0	37.8
1-3 conflicts	32.7	47.3
4-6 conflicts	12.3	8.1
7 or more conflicts	10.4	1.4

19.5: Physical Fights Without Weapons*

Frequency	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	24.9	41.9
1-3 conflicts	38.3	48.6
4-6 conflicts	14.1	2.7
7 or more conflicts	10.8	1.4

19.6: Physical Fights With Weapons*

Frequency	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	55.0	87.8
1-3 conflicts	17.8	5.4
4-6 conflicts	6.3	--
7 or more conflicts	3.0	--

* Statistically significant difference.

F. Experience of Conflict

Secondary panel teachers and students were asked what type of conflict threatened their personal safety at school or on school grounds. Teachers were much less likely than students to frequently feel threatened by conflict (i.e. to feel the conflict always or often threatened their safety). Both teachers and students felt most threatened by namecalling (22% of students, 4% of teachers) and weapons (21% of students, 4% of teachers). It is notable that although conflict with weapons was the *least observed* type of conflict, it was among the *most threatening*. Also notable is the difference between teachers and students; students felt more threatened by all types of conflict than did teachers. For details, see Table 20; for elementary panel responses, see Table 4.

Table 20: Experience of Conflict
(% of sample who felt the type of conflict always or often threatened their personal safety at school or on school grounds)

Type of Conflict	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
Namecalling*	21.6	4.1
Pushing*	11.2	2.7
Hitting*	15.6	1.4
Threats*	14.9	1.4
Weapons*	21.2	4.1

* Statistically significant difference.

In all types of conflict, except for namecalling, a somewhat higher proportion of male secondary students felt threatened than did female students. However, hitting was the only type of conflict where there were statistically significant differences (see Table 21 below).

Table 21:
Degree to Which the Following Threatened Personal Safety-- by gender
Secondary School Students

	MALES			FEMALES		
Type of Conflict	Never	Once in a while/ some-times	Often or always	Never	Once in a while/ some-times	Often or always
Pushing	34.2	54.5	11.4	46.2	39.4	14.4
Hitting*	39.4	44.9	15.8	56.2	23.8	20.0
Threats	39.7	42.9	17.5	46.1	36.3	17.7
Weapons	52.5	23.8	23.8	55.5	17.8	26.7
Namecalling	43.2	36.0	20.8	35.5	36.5	28.0

* Statistically significant difference.

G. Frequency of Participation in Conflict

Although, as noted in Section E, secondary school teachers *observed* fewer types of conflict than students, and, as noted in Section F, tended to be *less threatened* by conflict than students, they appear to be *involved* in more conflicts (32% of students were involved in at least one conflict, compared to 50% of teachers, a significant difference). However, twice as many students were involved in excessive numbers of incidents (7 or more). "Involvement" includes both active participation and intervention in conflict. The higher proportion of teacher involvement may be explained by Table 24 (Response to Conflict): most conflicts are responded to by teachers and administration. In other words, teachers tend to observe fewer conflicts since much of conflict takes place out of sight of teachers-- but on the whole, teachers are more involved with conflicts than students because they tend to be the 'front line' of containment, once conflict has reached a certain stage (see Brown et al. 1995b for an explanation of this)[4].

It is notable that secondary school teachers tended to be involved in fewer incidents of conflict than elementary school teachers, just as they observed fewer incidents.

Table 22: Frequency of Conflict

(How many conflicts have you been involved in at school since January 95)

Number of conflicts	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
No conflicts	62.1	47.3
1-3 conflicts	23.0	45.9
4-6 conflicts	3.7	1.4
7-15 conflicts	1.1	2.7
Over 15 conflicts	4.1	–

[4] Earlier research has found that when teachers and students talk about "conflict", they are usually talking about what might be called "official" conflict, i.e. conflict that has escalated to a state where it emerges from the majority of anonymous and unacknowledged conflict, and becomes officially acknowledged and responded to. See Brown et al., 1995b.

H. Involvement in School Conflict

Both secondary students and teachers agreed that students are most likely to be involved in conflict, while staff were much less likely to be involved. Teachers were somewhat more likely to believe that school intruders were involved in conflict (although the difference between teachers and students was not significant), while students were significantly more likely than teachers to attribute involvement to gangs.

Table 23: Involvement in School Conflict
(% of sample who said the following were typically involved in conflict at school; rank in brackets)

Who is involved	Student (%)	Teachers (%)
Students	83.3 (1).	87.8 (1)
Intruders	33.1 (2)	43.2 (2)
Gangs*	32.0 (3)	9.5 (4)
Staff	7.4 (4)	10.8 (3)

* Statistically significant difference.

I. Response to Conflict

Survey respondents agreed that teachers and administrators were most likely to respond to conflict at their school, although more teachers than students thought this. Teachers were more likely to think that police respond to school conflict. Comparatively few students or teachers thought that no one at the school responds to conflict (see Table 24). These findings are similar to those in the 1993 Conflict Resolution study. Also, focus group discussion in the 1993 study had found that the 'conflict' responded to here tended to be disputes that had reached a level of intensity sufficient to warrant 'official' intervention by school authorities; however, most conflict would have taken place outside of the range of this official response. See Brown et al, 1995b.

Table 24: Response to Conflict
(% of sample who said the following usually responded to conflict at school; rank in brackets)

Who Responds	Student (%)	Teachers (%)
Administration*	58.7 (1)	78.4 (2)
Teachers*	58.4 (2)	91.9 (1)
Students	29.7 (3)	36.5 (4)
Police*	29.7 (3)	43.2 (3)
No one	9.3 (4)	1.4 (5)

* Statistically significant difference.

J. How Conflicts are Resolved in Secondary Schools

As in the 1993 Conflict Resolution Study, there was a fairly pronounced difference in how teachers and students answered this. Most teachers (81%) thought conflicts are resolved when a staff member mediates; less than half (42%) of students believed this. Students tended to think that school conflict was worked out in a variety of ways: through peer mediation, staff solution, or everyone working it out themselves.[5] Less than 18% of teachers and 5% of teachers thought that school conflicts are not usually resolved.[6]

Table 25: How Conflicts Are Resolved at School
(% of sample who said the following strategies usually resolve conflict at school; rank of strategy in brackets)

How Conflicts Solved	Student (%)	Teachers (%)
Staff member mediates*	42.0 (1)	81.1 (1)
Student/friend/peer mediates*	36.1 (2)	55.4 (2)
Staff member chooses solution*	34.9 (3)	48.6 (3)
People in conflict work it out themselves*	27.5 (4)	44.6 (4)
Conflicts not usually resolved*	17.5 (5)	4.1 (5)

* Statistically significant difference.

K. Location of Conflict

Again, as in the 1993 Conflict Resolution study, there were some interesting differences in how secondary teachers and students identified the location of most conflicts. Students thought most conflicts took place outdoors (69%) while teachers were more likely to think conflicts took place in a school hall or other indoor place (81%). The classroom was a distinct third location of conflict (30-31%).

Table 26: Location of Conflict
(% of sample who said the following locations were where conflicts usually happen at school; rank of location in brackets)

School Location	Students (%)	Teachers (%)
Outdoors on school property	68.8 (1)	59.5 (2)
Indoor space*	50.2 (2)	81.1 (1)
Classroom	31.2 (3)	29.7 (3)
Cafeteria/lunchroom	16.0 (4)	18.9 (4)
Washroom	12.6 (5)	14.9 (5)

* Statistically significant difference.

[5] As with the elementary panel response in Section J, it should be noted that the interpretation of the terms "mediation" and "arbitration" were not defined for this questionnaire, and therefore responses reflect what people think these terms mean, rather than exact procedure.

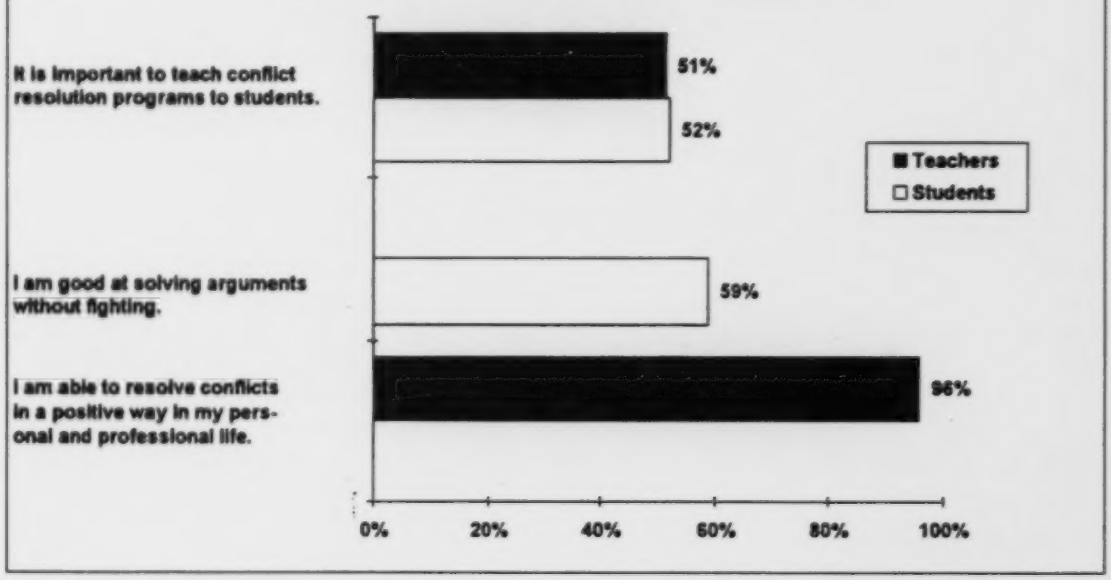
[6] Again, the type of conflict described here may be the "official" conflict that necessitates intervention by school authorities, as noted in Section I.

L. Conflict Resolution in Secondary Schools

i. Overall Perception of Conflict Resolution

A majority of secondary panel teachers and students (51-52%) agreed that it is important to teach Conflict Resolution programs to students; the proportion, however, is lower than in the 1993 Conflict Resolution survey (78% of students and 84% of teachers) and lower than responses in the elementary panel (see Figure 13 for secondary responses, and Figure 7 for elementary responses). Because some of the schools involved were different, one cannot make direct comparisons to the 1993 study; nonetheless, when examined together with information in Section Lii (Extent of Teaching), there exists the possibility that support for the program, while still positive, is less enthusiastic than in former days. Such changes are not unknown in the evolution of programs as they have evolved from pilots into an integrated activity of an organization.[7] Most students (59%) thought that they were good at solving arguments without fighting. Nearly all secondary teachers (96%) perceived that they were able to solve conflicts in a positive way, in their personal and professional lives.

Figure 13: Conflict Resolution Programs– Secondary Schools
(% who agreed always or often with the statement)



[7] Hence, more teachers in the secondary level were more aware of the Conflict Resolution program than were elementary teachers. See Section Lii (Extent of Teaching).

ii. Extent of Teaching of Conflict Resolution

Most secondary panel teachers were aware of the Conflict Resolution program in their school (a higher proportion than teachers in the elementary panel). Secondary teachers were much less likely to teach Conflict Resolution as a time-tabled part of courses than were elementary teachers (30% of elementary, 8% of secondary) and less likely to integrate Conflict Resolution strategies into their curriculum (70% of elementary, 24% of secondary). This may indicate the practical challenges secondary school teachers face in introducing material from outside of their subject area into the curriculum. Most teachers thought that school programs in general would benefit if school staff had more training in Conflict Resolution-- although they did not feel that their students would benefit if responding teachers themselves had this training (perhaps because, as noted in Section Li, nearly all responding secondary teachers thought they were already able to resolve conflicts in a positive way).

Table 27: Teaching of Conflict Resolution/Peacemakers in Secondary Schools (Secondary Teachers)

	YES (%)	NO (%)
Teach conflict resolution strategies as time-tabled part of course	8.2	91.8
Integrate conflict resolution strategies into program without time-tabling	45.8	54.2
Do you feel your students would benefit if YOU had more training in conflict resolution	39.7	60.3‡
Do you think your school programs would benefit if THE STAFF had more training in conflict resolution	64.4	35.6‡
Does your school have a conflict resolution, peer mediator, or peacemaker program	91.8	8.2‡
If program in school--Have you been involved in training the peer mediators/peacemakers	4.5	95.5
If program in school--Have you been involved in integrating conflict resolution/peer mediation/peacemaking into your curriculum	23.9	76.1
If program in school--Have you participated in staff conflict resolution/peer mediation training	28.4	71.6

‡Includes 'not sure'

iii. Conflict Resolution Student and Teacher Mediators

One tenth of the sampled students had taken Conflict Resolution courses (half at the school they were currently attending, half at another school). As well, about a third (34%) of sampled teachers had taken Conflict Resolution courses or workshops. Opinion of the workshops and of Conflict Resolution was very positive among the students and teachers who had participated. They are, however, more ambivalent about how others in the school view Conflict Resolution. Teachers who participated in the workshops were not convinced that Conflict Resolution has made their school a better place. The proportion of student workshop participants who believed that students are in favour of Conflict Resolution programs is the same as the proportion of all secondary students who think that Conflict Resolution is important to teach to students-- 52%. Slightly less than half (48%) of teacher workshop participants thought that most students were in favour of the program.

Table 28: Conflict Resolution in Secondary Schools (Secondary Students)

	YES at this school (%)	YES at another school (%)	NO (%)	NO ANSWER (%)
Have taken a course or workshop in Conflict Resolution	5.6	4.5	67.3	22.7

Table 29: Conflict Resolution in Secondary Schools (Secondary Teachers)

	YES (%)	NO (%)	NO ANSWER (%)
Have taken a course or workshop in Conflict Resolution	33.8	63.5	2.7

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Table 30: Opinions and Experiences of Conflict Resolution Mediators (Those who had taken a course or workshop on Conflict Resolution) (N = 27 students, 25 teachers)

	Students– AGREE (%)	Teachers– AGREE (%)
The workshop on Conflict Resolution was interesting.	81.5 (22)	92.0 (23)
The workshop on Conflict Resolution was worthwhile.	81.5 (22)	84.0 (21)
Most students would benefit from a workshop on Conflict Resolution.	77.8 (21)	92.0 (23)
I understand conflict better now.	77.8 (21)	64.0 (16)
I help my family/friends with their conflicts.	85.2 (23)	--
I use Conflict Resolution strategies in my personal life.	--	72.0 (18)
I use Conflict Resolution strategies in my professional life.	--	64.0 (16)
The Conflict Resolution program has made our school a better place.	59.3 (16)	44.0 (11)
Most students are in favour of the Conflict Resolution Program.	51.9 (14)	48.0 (12)

Workshop Participant Questionnaires

A. Sample Description

Workshops on Conflict Resolution, Mediation and Anger Management were offered by the Conflict Resolution Team to Toronto Board staff starting in 1992. A random sample of teachers (half elementary panel, half secondary panel) was taken of those who had participated in the workshops between 1992 and early 1995. In May 1995, a questionnaire was sent to these participants requesting their opinions about the effectiveness and usefulness of the workshops. 154 questionnaires were returned, or 54% of randomly selected workshop participants (approximately half the returned questionnaires were from the elementary panel, and about half from the secondary panel). Participants were 25% male and 75% female[1], and taught from the JK to OAC grades. On average, participants had 19 years of teaching experience.

B. Memory of the Workshops

Most participants could remember at least a fair amount from the workshop activities. Although participants in more recent workshops were somewhat more likely to remember than those who had attended one or two years earlier, the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 31:
"Overall, how much can you remember from the workshop(s) that you attended?"

	Participants (%)
A great deal of what was done	18.2
A fair amount of what was done	57.1
Not very much-nothing	18.8

C. Perceptions of the Workshops

In responding to a series of statements about the workshops, most participants were quite favourable towards their experience: a majority thought that all teachers, administrators, students, and parents would benefit from the training, and that Conflict Resolution skills were essential life skills (see Figure 14). Female teachers were more likely to strongly agree with the statements than male teachers (see Table 32).

1 Elementary panel participants were 14% male 86% female, while secondary panel participants were 35% male and 65% female. The proportion of female teachers is therefore higher than the Board average, in both panels.

Figure 14: Perceptions of the Conflict Resolution Workshops

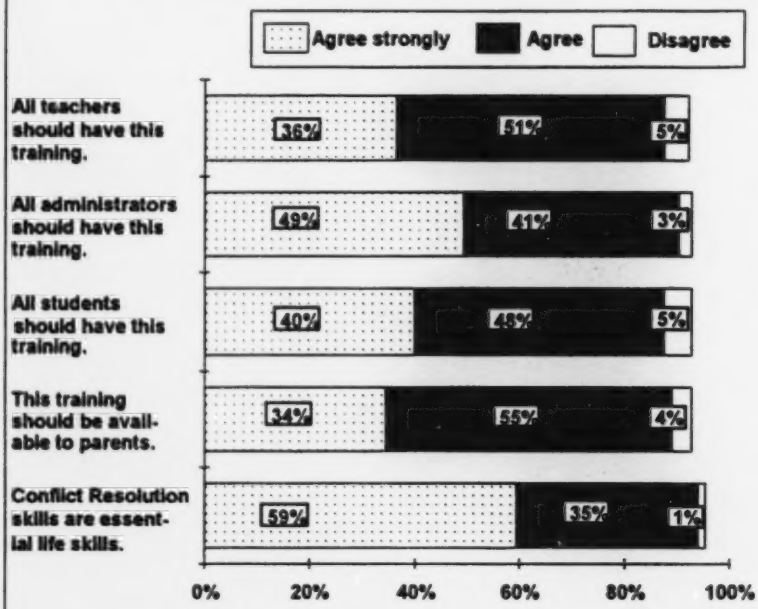

Table 32:
Statements About Conflict Resolution Workshops-- by gender

	MALES			FEMALES		
STATEMENT	Agree strongly	Agree	Dis-agree	Agree strongly	Agree	Dis-agree
All teachers should have this training.*	29.0	47.4	13.2	39.1	52.2	1.7
All administrators should have this training.*	39.5	44.7	7.9	53.0	39.1	0.9
All students should have this training. *	18.4	55.3	18.4	47.0	46.1	0.9
This training should be available for parents.*	15.8	68.4	7.9	40.9	49.6	2.6
Conflict Resolution skills are life skills.	44.7	44.7	2.6	64.4	31.3	0.9

* Statistically significant difference.

D. Usefulness of the Workshops

i. What Was Most Helpful

Most participants (122 of 154) commented on what information or activities from the workshop that they felt were most helpful. The majority of comments related to conflict resolution skills and strategies, in particular, role-playing, mediation or negotiation skills, and anger management. Examples include:

"Activities which stressed differences in how each of us deal with anger, conflict, and what each of us consider conflict. Also important were techniques to diffuse conflicts so as to come to a resolution to the conflict."

"The role-playing-- time to observe the proper way and a chance to practice."

"The steps of a conflict, for example, how to use sentences for different structures in order to solve the incident, listening, and body gestures."

"Role playing to emphasize the feelings of another person and learning about what kind of language to use when helping to solve a conflict."

"Keeping calm, objective, distancing oneself from the problem, and following an excellent process of steps."

Table 33:
What Workshop Information or Activities Were Most Helpful

Information/Activity	Number of responses	% of participants who responded*
Role playing	38	31.1%
CR steps/strategies/styles	31	25.4%
Mediation skills	19	15.6%
Anger management	16	13.1%
Active listening	15	12.3%
Opportunity to practice CR skills	12	9.8%
Negotiation skills	11	9.0%
"I Messages"	11	9.0%
Resources/references available	6	4.9%
Opportunity for group discussion/peer interaction	5	4.1%
Aiming for "Win-win" resolution	4	3.3%
CR skills for students	3	2.5%
OTHER	10	8.2%
TOTAL ———>	181	**

NOTES:
* 122 participants responded to this question.
** Due to multiple responses, percentages exceed 100%.

ii. Usefulness to Personal Life and Teaching Practice

Most (81%) of participants thought the skills and information on Conflict Resolution attained through the workshop were useful to their teaching practice (86%-- see Table 35), and to their personal life (81%-- see Table 34), although more female than male teachers thought the skills and information were useful to teaching. Participants were most likely to think the workshop training changed their teaching practice a little (51%) or a fair amount (25%). Comparatively few (4%) thought the training changed their teaching practice a lot (see Table 36). A higher proportion of female participants thought the training changed their teaching a fair amount (30% of females, 13% of males) while a higher proportion of male participants thought the training did not change their teaching practice (29% of males, 11% of females).

Table 34: Usefulness of skills and information on conflict resolution to personal life

	TOTAL (%)	MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)
Very useful	18.8	15.8	20.0
Useful	62.3	52.6	65.2
Not useful	11.7	18.4	9.6

Table 35: Usefulness of skills and information on conflict resolution to teaching practice*

	TOTAL (%)	MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)
Very useful	28.6	18.4	32.2
Useful	57.1	55.3	57.4
Not useful	6.5	15.8	3.5

* Statistically significant difference between males and females.

Table 36: Extent to Which Training Changed Teaching Practice*

	TOTAL (%)	MALES (%)	FEMALES (%)
Changed teaching practice a lot	3.9	2.6	4.4
Changed teaching practice a fair amount	25.3	13.2	29.6
Change teaching practice a little	51.3	52.6	50.4
Did not change teaching practice at all	15.6	29.0	11.3

*Statistically significant difference between males and females.

iii. Application of the Workshop Information

Participants applied their workshop skills and information in some directions more than others. They were most likely to apply the training in relating to students: nearly all participants (91%) applied what they learned in relating to students 'somewhat' 'a lot' or 'a great deal', with the majority (51%) applying their training in relating to students 'a lot' or 'a great deal'. Other applications were not as direct, although a majority of participants applied at least some of the workshop skills and information in relating to colleagues, parents, and other professionals; teaching subject content; and organizing extra-curricular and co-curricular activities (see Figure 15). Participants teaching in elementary schools were more likely than those teaching in secondary schools to apply this training in relating to students, relating to parents, and in teaching subject content (see Table 37).

Figure 15:
Extent To Which Teachers Have Applied Conflict Resolution Skills and Information

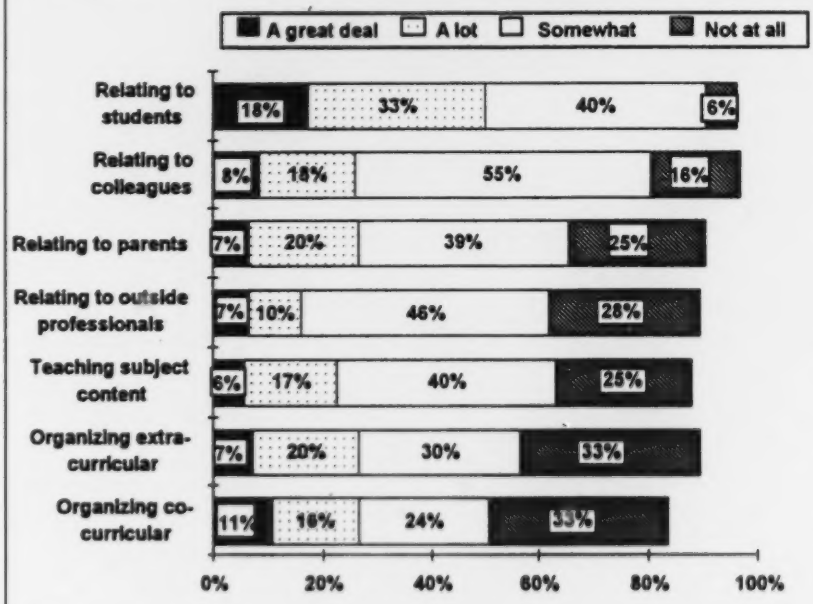

Table 37:
Application of Workshop Information-- Elementary and Secondary Levels

	ELEMENTARY				SECONDARY			
Extent to which participant applied workshop skills/information	A great deal	A lot	Some-what	Not at all	A great deal	A lot	Some-what	Not at all
In relating to my students*	26.4	40.3	25.0	2.8	9.9	24.7	54.3	8.6
In relating to my colleagues	6.9	22.2	54.2	12.5	9.9	13.6	54.3	19.8
In relating to parents*	4.2	29.2	43.1	16.7	8.6	11.1	35.8	32.1
In relating to outside professionals	4.2	11.1	54.2	20.8	8.6	8.6	37.0	34.6
In teaching subject content (e.g. English, Math, Music) *	2.8	23.6	41.7	18.1	8.6	9.9	39.5	30.9
In organizing extra-curricular activities (e.g. drama, student council, sports teams, clubs)	6.9	23.6	27.8	31.9	7.4	14.8	32.1	34.6
In organizing co-curricular activities (e.g. advisory/mentoring programs)	12.5	13.9	27.8	27.8	9.9	17.3	21.0	38.3

* Statistically significant difference.

E. Improving the Workshops

Fifty-five percent of respondents gave suggestions for improvement; the rest could not remember enough, or did not comment. Among the suggestions given by participants for improving the workshops:

- more time for actual practice/information sharing (10%)
- greater emphasis on relevancy (7%)
- need for follow-up, networking resources, refresher courses (7%)
- more active participation (3%)
- more handouts/resources (3%)

F. Conflict Resolution Skills Supporting Other School Initiatives

Over three quarters of participants (78%) said the Conflict Resolution skills also connected or supported other programs or initiatives in the school. Over thirty programs or initiatives were listed, including:

- mentoring/mentoring programs (19 participants)
- advisor/advisee programs (10 participants)
- antiracist education/multiculturalism programs (10 participants)
- Learning/Magic circle (10 participants)
- Peacemakers (9 participants)
- safe school initiatives (9 participants)
- school philosophy/code of behavior/integration (9 participants)
- peer mediation (6 participants)
- peer tutoring/helping programs (6 participants)

Summary Discussion

School Climate

A previous 1993 secondary school survey and 1994 elementary survey had found that while teachers and students on the whole had positive attitudes about the school they belonged to, teachers were more positive than were students. This pattern was confirmed in the 1995 survey. Among all survey participants, there was more agreement than disagreement in responses to school climate statements, but elementary and secondary teachers were more likely than elementary and secondary students to agree with positive statements, and to disagree with negative statements. As in previous studies, sometimes the contrasts were striking, for example:

- 80% of elementary teachers, and 80% of secondary teachers, thought that students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at the school, while 54% of elementary students (Grade 4-Grade 8) and 43% of secondary students (Grade 9-OAC) thought this.
- 92% of elementary teachers, and 89% of secondary teachers, agreed that teachers in the school treat students fairly, while 62% of elementary students and 53% of secondary students thought this.
- 65% of elementary teachers, and 55% of secondary teachers, agreed that students in the school follow the school rules, compared to 31% of elementary students and 28% of secondary students.

While there are exceptions, elementary teacher responses to school climate statements are often closer to secondary teacher responses than they are to elementary student responses; likewise, secondary teacher responses often have more similarity to elementary teacher responses than they do to secondary student responses. Specifically:

- There were 23 questions on school climate and feelings of safety that were answered by *both elementary teachers and secondary teachers*. In 19 cases of the 23 cases, there were no significant differences between elementary and secondary teachers.

- There were 16 questions on school climate and feelings of safety that were answered by *elementary teachers and students*. In 15 of 16 cases, there were significant differences between elementary teacher and student responses.

- There were 20 questions on school climate and feelings of safety that were answered by *secondary teachers and students*. In all cases, there were significant differences between secondary teachers and students in their responses.

Feelings of Safety in the School

The majority of elementary and secondary students and teachers felt safe in their school or school grounds. This finding is similar to several previous Toronto Board and other Board surveys of school safety. Furthermore, secondary students and both elementary and secondary teachers felt safer on school grounds than outside school grounds (this was particularly noticeable in the case of female secondary students). One should note that fewer elementary

students felt safer in the school yard (59%) than in the school building itself. Both elementary and secondary teachers appeared to feel safer than students.

Students Talking to Adults and Others If They Have a Problem

Both elementary and secondary teachers have repeatedly indicated that they believe it is important to students to be able to talk to someone (preferably an adult) if they had a problem. This is reflected in the fact that most elementary and secondary teachers thought that, in their school, most students are encouraged to talk to an adult in the school if they had a problem. However, this is easier said than done: in many previous studies (see, for example, the 1991 Central Commerce Student Survey) students have indicated a preference to talk to a friend or peer if they had a problem, rather than (or before) talking to an adult in the school. Likewise, 58% of elementary students in this study said they would talk to a friend in the school if they had a problem, compared to less than half (46%) who would talk to an adult in the school if they had a problem. Fortunately, given that 71% of elementary students would talk to a friend or an adult, most elementary students had means of communicating with others if they had problems. In the secondary level, less than half (44%) of students said they would talk to an adult in the school if they had a problem.

Elementary students were also asked if they talked to an adult when they felt threatened by conflict or fighting: 43% said they would; yet 44% said they would not, and 13% did not answer, a finding not surprising in the light of previous research on elementary school bullying (see Cranach et al, 1995). These factors are also related: students who feel comfortable talking to friends or adults if they had a problem, were also most likely to have told an adult if they felt threatened due to fighting or conflict.

Types of Conflict Observed

Elementary teachers, and secondary teachers and students, were asked what types of conflicts they observed. The most frequently observed conflicts were about rumour and gossip; the least frequently observed were physical conflict with weapons. These findings are similar to the 1993 secondary survey. A related question was given to elementary students, who were asked which types of conflict they had experienced since the March Break (out of pushing, hitting, threats, weapons, and name-calling). Elementary students were most likely to have experienced name-calling, and least likely to have experienced conflict with weapons.

Secondary teachers observed fewer types of conflict than secondary students; this fits with previous research, which has demonstrated that most school conflict takes place out of sight of teachers-- therefore teachers would observe fewer conflicts, on the whole, than students. Elementary teachers observed more types of conflict than secondary teachers (and more frequent incidents of most types of conflict than secondary school students). There are several possible explanations for this. It may be that the general level of conflict in elementary schools is greater than in secondary schools. Other equally valid interpretations include:

- elementary teachers are (through such activities as yard patrol) in more contact with students outside of the classroom, where most conflict takes place;
- secondary students may be more practiced at keeping conflict from the attention of secondary teachers.

Frequency of Conflict in the School

Most secondary students (62%) said they had not been involved in any conflict since January.[1] This was approximately the same proportion as in the 1993 study. Such results beg the obvious question of what the students meant by "conflict". A series of focus groups of students and teachers conducted in 1994 discussed this:

> ... when students and teachers discussed what they meant by "conflict" in focus group discussion, it became apparent that this is a concept that varies according to who is talking about it. That is, everyone considered "conflict" and especially "serious conflict" to be a certain level (or threshold) of dispute, but different people had different thresholds of dispute. Many students and some teachers defined "conflict" as referring to physical disputes; others thought that school conflict consisted of a widespread level of dispute including rumour and gossip. Teachers and many (although not all) students thought that sexism and racism were "serious" conflicts along with physical conflict. There was a consensus among focus group respondents that students in the questionnaire results were probably referring to physical conflict. (Brown et. al, 1995).

In the 1995 study, elementary and secondary teachers were also asked about their involvement in conflict. ("Involvement" includes both active participation, and intervention, in conflict.) Results indicate that :

- secondary school teachers were involved in more conflicts than secondary school students (50% of secondary school teachers and 32% of secondary school students were involved in at least one conflict);
- elementary school teachers were involved in more conflicts than secondary school teachers (80% of elementary school teachers were involved in at least one conflict).

Judging from responses to other questions, most teacher involvement took the form of responding to already existing student conflict. It is interesting that while secondary teachers had *observed* fewer conflicts than their students, they were *involved* in more conflicts than their students. This may be because while teachers are out of sight of much conflict that takes place in the school, they are the first line of containment once the conflict has escalated to a certain level. As there are far fewer teachers than there are students, the average teacher is going to be involved in more conflicts because of his/her role in containment, although the average student may observe more conflict going on.

Experience of Being Threatened

Elementary teachers, and secondary teachers and students, were asked if their safety was threatened by different types of conflict. Secondary and elementary teachers were much less likely to feel threatened than secondary students, regardless of types of conflict. In regards to specific types of conflict, elementary teachers were more likely to feel threatened by pushing; secondary students and teachers were more threatened by namecalling and weapons.

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1 Elementary students were not asked this question.

Location of Conflict

Elementary students and teachers both agreed that the majority of school conflict took place not in the school, but outdoors (which would explain why elementary students felt less safe in the school yard than in the school itself). There was a split between secondary teachers and students in where they perceived school conflicts to take place, which was similar to 1993 survey findings: secondary students thought most conflicts took place outdoors, while secondary teachers thought most school conflicts took place in a school hall or other indoor place. Secondary school focus groups conducted in 1994 suggested that this was because most conflict took place outdoors or away from teachers.

Resolution of Conflict

As in the 1993 secondary survey, there was a pronounced difference in how secondary panel teachers and students thought that conflicts are resolved. Secondary teachers were more likely to say that school conflicts are resolved when a staff member mediates, while secondary students are more likely to think that conflict is worked out in a variety of ways. Focus group discussion of this issue in 1994 did provide possible interpretation of this:

> Focus group discussion did indicate a difference in student and teacher perception of teacher mediation. Many felt that some teachers often only impose a solution, without resolving the conflict behind the solution. Also, because teachers can see only a proportion of student behavior in the school, they often do not see the continuation of the conflict afterwards. Teachers tended to agree that they might think a conflict is resolved when they intervene but miss its continuation afterwards. But they also noted that because students may be thinking only of serious physical conflict, they may be unaware of teacher mediations in other types of conflict. It was pointed out that teachers are mediating 'informally' all the time, often heading off a conflict before it has a chance to occur. Such diverse responses indicate that 'mediation', like 'conflict', is a work with many different potential meanings. (Brown et al., 1995).

However, elementary teachers in the 1995 survey indicated that they, like secondary students, thought conflicts tended to be solved in a variety of ways. It may be worth investigating elementary and secondary teacher perception of conflict resolutions in more detail, to see if possible differences in their strategies to conflict do exist.

The Conflict Resolution Program

Most students and teachers in both the elementary and secondary levels are in favour of conflict resolution, at least on general principle. In terms of implementation, there are considerable differences between the elementary and secondary panels. A higher proportion of elementary teachers and students appear to have taken conflict resolution training, and elementary teachers were more likely to have integrated conflict resolution into classroom teaching. However, more secondary school teachers were aware of the program than were elementary school teachers. Also, considering the challenges of introducing non-subject related material into the secondary school curriculum, the fact that a quarter of the secondary teachers were integrating some aspect of Conflict Resolution into their curriculum is quite impressive.

Most elementary and secondary teachers thought that they themselves were able to resolve personal or professional conflicts in a positive way. However, they thought that, in general, school programs would benefit if school staff had more training in Conflict Resolution. This may be a legitimate observation; it may also be in some cases an indication of a 'blind spot' on the part of teacher self-reporting.

Students who had taken Conflict Resolution training-- 22% of elementary students and 10% of secondary students-- were positive about the training (although the secondary students tended to be more positive than the elementary students). For example, 72% of elementary student mediators thought the process allowed them to help other students, and 85% of secondary student mediators thought they were able to help family and friends. However, both elementary and secondary mediators were less certain about their impact on the school, and on other students' support for the program. Thus, although these mediators were themselves convinced of the effectiveness of the process, their responses indicate that other students remained unconvinced. There is limited evidence that support for Conflict Resolution at the secondary level may have declined (the proportion of secondary level students and teachers who agreed that it is important to teach conflict resolution skills has fallen, although a majority still hold this view).[2]

Elementary and secondary teachers who had attended Conflict Resolution workshops over a three year period were also sent a questionnaire requesting their opinions about the effectiveness and usefulness of the program. Most participants said they could still remember at least a fair amount of the workshop activities, even those who had attended workshops two or more years earlier. Participants were quite favourable towards their experience-- echoing the positive experience of students who had taken Conflict Resolution training. Participants agreed that teachers, administrators, students and parents would benefit from the training, and that Conflict Resolution skills were essential life skills (although female teachers thought this more strongly than did male teachers).

On the whole, teachers who attended these workshops found them moderately useful, and thought that the workshops had some-- albeit not enormous-- impact on their teaching (again, female teachers were more likely to find the workshops useful than were male teachers). A majority of workshop participants applied at least some of the skills and information they learned; the information and skills were most effectively applied in teachers' relations to students. Participants teaching in elementary schools were more likely to apply the skills and information than participants teaching in secondary schools-- which relates to the above teacher survey findings, showing integration of Conflict Resolution into the teaching curriculum at the elementary level to be more extensive than at the secondary level.

It was notable that the workshop participants came up with a list of over 30 programs or initiatives that Conflict Resolution skills are connected with or supporting-- from Transition

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[2] However, facilitators of the Conflict Resolution programs in all 10 secondary schools noted (in interviews conducted at the conclusion of the 1995 school year) that the programs were going to be maintained and/or increased over 1995-96; as well, 25 of 26 elementary school facilitators believed their programs would be maintained or expanded. This indicates that administrative support for the programs was continuing at both the elementary and secondary level. See Appendix 1.

Years mentoring programs to elementary level Anti-Bullying initiatives. The potential of the Conflict Resolution program appears to be considerable; certainly, those who have participated in training are positive towards the program. The application of the program at this time has yet to achieve this potential, despite the fact that Conflict Resolution is perceived by students and teachers in a positive way. Considering the well-known challenges in achieving any sort of educational change, such modest effectiveness should not be undervalued. Still, effective implementation is a challenge that educators will have to address, as the Conflict Resolution principles and practices become integrated components of the school community.

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Appendix 1:
Interviews with Secondary and Elementary Program Facilitators

- Interviews were conducted with at least one Conflict Resolution facilitator in 36 elementary and secondary schools. The interviews were conducted at the conclusion of the last school year (June 1995).

- The programs were usually called "Conflict Resolution", "Peer Mediation", or (at the elementary level only) "Peacemakers". A couple of elementary programs called themselves "Anti-bullying", combining Conflict Resolution and the theoretically separate but related Anti-bullying program. A few did not appear to have names.

- As described by facilitators, Conflict Resolution range from the highly organized and structured, to the very informal. Here are a couple of programs, as described by their facilitators:

  "Kids, teachers, VP refer cases to me. Two staff advisors talk to students named in a case. I choose any two trained mediators willing to deal with the case. Appointment for session is made. Mediators brainstorm with them. Give back a copy of the agreement reached. Later I check how the mediation works. Have dealt with about 20 cases (this year)." (Secondary school.)

  "We train the children. Grade 4,5, and 6 students apply to me. The [program] team interviews the children. Commit to two day training, weekly meeting, and going to the yard to solve problems. Parents are consulted first. Certificate is given for completing training. Schedule is made; Peacemaking is done. If they cannot resolve the conflict, then one adult (member of the team) comes in. If the conflict is violent, children don't get involved, and go to the teacher in the yard." (Elementary school.)

  "Joint committee for conflict resolution-- parents and staff. In-built with curriculum: social interaction, values education. Peacemakers help conflicts in the yard. Twenty to 25 trained. They wear yellow jackets, work in teams of 2 kids. Grades 4-6. Fights or pushing are handled by teachers/adults." (Elementary school.)

  "No training. Children learn from each other and adult modeling. Children are expected to solve their problems. We sit with them and have them talking to each other. Any one can do peacemaking. Usually two children act as peacemakers....."(Elementary school.)

  "Done through Learning Circle. Part of curriculum. Resisting awareness against bullying". (Elementary school.)

  "No structured program per se. We do it in a diffuse way. Making kids aware of their own behavior." (Elementary school).

- In all but one school, facilitators thought the Conflict Resolution program would continue in the school for the next school year. There were a few reservations: about lack of

support for other teachers, lack of funding for workshops, and the transfer of staff involved in the program. In three schools, the facilitator was transferring to another school.

- Among the elements of the program thought important were: making students aware of conflict and given them empowerment and responsibility; building of self-esteem for the student; increasing the use of problem-solving without resorting to violence; that adults (staff and parents) as well as students are involved.

- Among the difficulties encountered were: lack of referrals (by administrators, teachers, students); reluctance or conservatism on the part of some administrators and teachers; lack of financial or staff support; difficulty of some children in recognizing peer mediators; time needed to administer the program.

- Among the things that facilitators thought should be changed: more referrals (by administrators, teachers, students); more training (of students and staff); integration of Conflict Resolution into the curriculum.

Appendix 2:
Research Instruments

INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS
STUDENT SURVEY: CONFLICT RESOLUTION (May 1995)

Thanks, in advance, for assisting with the distribution of the Conflict Resolution questionnaires for your students during class time. The survey takes about 30 to 45 minutes to finish (depending on grade level).

Please tell your students:

- We want to know what they feel about school.
- We want their own opinions about different things.

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Students should **not** put their names on the surveys.
- All responses to these questionnaires will be confidential. No school, class or person will be identified.
- Make sure students do not tell each other the "answer" to the question. Tell them it is important that we get their own answers, not someone else's.

When the class is done:

- Please collect the surveys and return them to your principal in the return envelope provided.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call Rob Brown (397-3527) or Lisa Rosolen (397-3529), Research Services, or Judith Arbus (393-8376), Conflict Resolution.

About the study:
The research is a collaborative effort of Conflict Resolution (Student Support Services) and Research Services. It is being conducted at elementary schools across the city to assist the Board in evaluating the Conflict Resolution program.

Conflict Resolution/Peacemakers-- Questionnaire for Elementary Students

Please answer the questions below, to help teachers and others know how things are for you at your school.

Part A. SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

1. Are you a boy or a girl? *Boy* *Girl* (Circle one.)
2. What grade are you in? *4* *5* *6* *7* *8* (Circle one.)

Part B. ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

Tell us how often these things happen at your school. (Put a circle around one answer for each.)

1. I like coming to this school.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
2. There is tension among the students at this school.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
3. There is tension among teachers and some students here.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
4. Teachers here treat students fairly.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
5. I can talk to a friend in this school when I have a problem.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
6. I can talk to an adult in this school when I have a problem.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
7. Teachers in this school show respect to students.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
8. Students in this school show respect to teachers.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
9. Students here show respect to each other.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
10. I feel safe inside the school.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
11. I feel safe in the school yard.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
12. It is important to teach students how to resolve conflicts.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*

13. Students at this school do not have enough chances to talk about the things that are important to them.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
14. I have someone to play with at recess.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
15. Racial incidents (name-calling, etc.) happen in this school.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
16. Students here fight first and think second.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
17. School rules are clear and fair.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
18. Students here follow the school rules.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
19. Students here know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
20. Teachers here are good at keeping arguments between students from turning into fights.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
21. Most students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at this school.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
22. I am good at solving arguments without fighting.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
23. Most students watch a fight without going for help.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
24. Older kids pick on younger ones.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
25. Lots of students won't let you play with them.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
26. Some students get picked on.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
27. I think it's fun to give kids trouble.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*

PART C. CONFLICT IN YOUR SCHOOL

The next questions are about conflict and fighting that you might have experienced in your school since the March Break.

For each of the following, put a circle around the answer to show how often you experienced the kind of conflict since the March Break.

1. Pushing	*Never*	*Once in a while*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
2. Hitting	*Never*	*Once in a while*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
3. Threats	*Never*	*Once in a while*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
4. Weapons	*Never*	*Once in a while*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*
5. Name-calling	*Never*	*Once in a while*	*Sometimes*	*Often*	*Always*

6. Where has this conflict or fighting most often taken place? (Circle as many as are true for you.)

classrooms

washrooms

in the school yard or playground

in the gym

at the lockers

in the lunchroom or cafeteria

7. If you felt unsafe because of conflict or fighting, have you told a teacher or an adult in your school about it?

Yes *No*

Part D.	ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Please answer the questions below, by putting a circle around one answer for each.

1. Our teacher helps us to learn how to listen to each other.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
2. In our classroom we talk about conflicts people have and how they can resolve them.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
3. We sometimes do role-plays of conflicts in our class and try to resolve the problems.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
4. We read stories where the characters have conflicts with each other.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
5. In our classroom, we write stories about conflicts.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
6. We have Learning Circle/Magic Circle in our classrooms.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
7. We learn that people of different races, religions and countries are equally important.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
8. We learn that boys and girls are equally important.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
9. We learn that put-downs about race, religion, language or gender aren't accepted in our classroom.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
10. We talk about feelings in our class.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
11. I think most students in this classroom feel good about themselves.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*
12. We do not allow "put-downs" in this class.	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Once in a while*	*Never*

Part E. PEACEMAKER PROGRAMS

Peacemaker programs are progams where students help keep conflicts and arguments from turning into fights. They are also called conflict resolution and conflict management programs.

1. Is there a peacemaker program in your school? (Circle one) *Yes* *No* *I'm not sure*

Please circle one: "*Agree*", "*Disagree*", or "*I'm not sure*" after each sentence below.

2. I think peacemaker programs help kids work out disagreements. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
3. Peacemakers do a good job at school. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
4. It is a good idea for kids to learn how to be peacemakers. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
5. It's better to work out your own problems and not use peacemakers. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
6. I don't understand how peacemaking is supposed to work. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
7. Peacemaking has helped solve conflicts I've been in. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
8. I'd rather work things out for myself than get help from the peacemakers. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
9. I don't think peacemaking works. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
10. When peacemakers try to help solve a conflict, it doesn't stay fixed; the same kids may start fighting again soon. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*

Part F.	ABOUT BEING A PEACEMAKER

1. Are you a peacemaker at your school? (Circle one) *Yes* *No*

If the answer is "*Yes*", please answer the questions below. If the answer is "*No*", please stop and give your questionnaire to your teacher.

Please circle one: "*Agree*", "*Disagree*", or "*I'm not sure*" after each sentence below.

2. I have learned different ways of solving problems since I became a peacemaker. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
3. I like being a peacemaker. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
4. I have been able to help other kids by being a peacemaker. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
5. I have helped my school be a better place. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
6. Peacemaking has helped me to solve my own problems better. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
7. Being a peacemaker is hard. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
8. A lot of kids won't pay attention to the peacemakers. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*
9. I've been able to help students resolve most conflicts when I've tried. *Agree* *Disagree* *I'm not sure*

Thank you very much for your work!

Please give this questionnaire to your teacher.

Toronto Board of Education
Research Services

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is part of an on-going evaluation of conflict resolution/peacemaker programs. It is a joint effort of Student Support Services and Research Services. It is being conducted at elementary schools across the city to assist the Board in evaluating the Conflict Resolution program. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire.

All responses to the questionnaires will be confidential. No teacher will be identified.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to call Rob Brown, Research Services (397-3527) or Judith Arbus, Conflict Resolution (393-8376).

Yours truly,

Rob Brown
Research Officer

Conflict Resolution Programs: Elementary Teachers' Questionnaire

I. SCHOOL PROGRAM AND TEACHER INVOLVEMENT

1. In what grade (s) do you teach this school year? (Circle as many as applicable.)

Grade	JK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Special Education

2. You are...
   ( ) male
   ( ) female

3. Do you teach conflict resolution strategies as a time-tabled part of your program?
   ( ) yes
   ( ) no

4. Do you integrate conflict resolution strategies into your program (but without time-tabling for it)?
   ( ) yes
   ( ) no

5. Do you feel your students would benefit if you had more training in conflict resolution?
   ( ) yes
   ( ) no
   ( ) not sure

6. Do you think your school programs would benefit if the staff had more training in conflict resolution?
   ( ) yes
   ( ) no
   ( ) not sure

7. Does your school have any of the following: a conflict resolution, peer mediator, or peacemaker program?
   ( ) yes
   ( ) no
   ( ) not sure

8. *If your school does have a conflict resolution, peer mediator or peacemaker program,*

	YES	NO
a. Have you been involved in training the peer mediators/peacemakers?	1	2
b. Have you been involved in integrating conflict resolution/peer mediation/peacemaking into your curriculum?	1	2
c. Have you participated in staff conflict resolution/ peer mediation/peacemaking training?	1	2

II. SCHOOL CLIMATE

1. How much do you agree with the following statements about your school? (Circle one number only for each question.)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
a. Students like coming to this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. There is tension among the students at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. There is tension among teachers and some students here.	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. Teachers here treat students fairly.	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. Students are encouraged to talk to an adult in the school when they have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. Teachers in this school show respect to students.	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. Students in this school show respect to teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. Students here show respect to each other.	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. Incidents of sexism occur in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
j. I feel safe on school property.	1	2	3	4	5	9
k. I feel safe outside of school property.	1	2	3	4	5	9
l. Students feel safe in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
m. It is important to teach conflict resolution programs to students.	1	2	3	4	5	9
n. Students at this school do not have enough say over the things that are important to them.	1	2	3	4	5	9
o. Racial incidents (name-calling, etc.) happen in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
p. Students here fight first and think second.	1	2	3	4	5	9
q. School rules are clear and fair.	1	2	3	4	5	9
r. Students here follow the school rules.	1	2	3	4	5	9
s. Teachers here follow the school rules.	1	2	3	4	5	9
t. Students ask me for help or advice.	1	2	3	4	5	9

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
u. Students here know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight.	1	2	3	4	5	9
v. Teachers here are good at keeping arguments between students from turning into fights.	1	2	3	4	5	9
w. Most students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
x. I am able to resolve conflicts in a positive way in my personal and professional life.	1	2	3	4	5	9
y. Children here are mean and insulting to one another.	1	2	3	4	5	9
z. Older children pick on younger ones.	1	2	3	4	5	9

III. QUESTIONS ABOUT CONFLICT IN YOUR SCHOOL

1. These questions look at your perception of school conflicts. How many of the following have you **observed** at your school, since January 1995?

	No Conflicts	1-3 Conflicts	4-6 Conflicts	7 or more Conflicts	Unsure/ Cannot Remember
a. Physical fights *with* weapons	1	2	3	4	9
b. Physical fights without weapons	1	2	3	4	9
c. Verbal disputes about property issues (e.g. disputes about money, clothing, jewelry, CD's etc.)	1	2	3	4	9
d. Verbal disputes about rumor and gossip (e.g. people talking about others behind their back, being "two-faced", etc.)	1	2	3	4	9

	No Conflicts	1-3 Conflicts	4-6 Conflicts	7 or more Conflicts	Unsure/ Cannot Remember
e. Verbal disputes about gender relations (e.g. disputes and insults between boys and girls, sexism, sex-stereotyping, etc.)	1	2	3	4	9
f. Verbal disputes about race/racial issues (e.g. insults based on race, colour, religion, stereotyping etc.)	1	2	3	4	9

2. **Where** do conflicts **usually** happen at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) classroom
( ) washroom
( ) hall, other indoor space
( ) outdoors, on school property
( ) lunchroom or cafeteria
( ) other location: _____

3. **Who** are typically **involved** in conflicts at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) students
( ) staff
( ) gangs
( ) intruders
( ) other: _____

4. **Who** usually **responds** to conflicts at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) teachers
( ) administration (principal, vice-principals)
( ) students
( ) police
( ) other: _____
( ) no one

5. **How** are conflicts usually **resolved** at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) people in conflict work it out themselves
( ) staff member (teacher/administrator) mediates
( ) staff member chooses solution (i.e. contract, suspension, detention)
( ) student/friend/peer mediates
( ) other: _____
( ) conflicts are not usually resolved

6. How many conflicts with students have you been involved in at school since January 1995? (Please check one answer only.)

( ) no conflicts
( ) 1-3 conflicts
( ) 4-6 conflicts
( ) 7-15 conflicts
( ) over 15 conflicts

7. To what degree do you feel that the following threaten *your* personal safety while at the school or on school grounds? (Please circle one answer only.)

	Never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Always	Cannot Say
Pushing	1	2	3	4	5	9
Hitting	1	2	3	4	5	9
Threats	1	2	3	4	5	9
Weapons	1	2	3	4	5	9
Name-calling	1	2	3	4	5	9

IV. CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND ACTIVITIES

1. Please indicate how often each of these things has happened in your classroom this school year. (Please circle one number for each statement.)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
a. In the classroom, we talk about conflicts people have and how to resolve them.	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. We role play conflict situations and how to resolve them.	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. In the curriculum, I deliberately include stories and books in which the characters have inter-personal conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. In our classroom, the students have been asked to write stories about conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. We have Learning Circle/Magic Circle in our classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. In the classroom, the students learn that people of different races, religions and countries are equally important.	1	2	3	4	5	9

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
g. I teach my students that put-downs about race, religion, language or gender aren't tolerated in our classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. I include discussions about feelings and help children learn to articulate their feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. We have class meetings to discuss friendship and inter-personal behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	9

V. PEACEMAKER/CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAMS

1. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements, about Peacemaker/Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation Programs.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Unsure/Do Not know
a. Peacemakers do a good job at school.	1	2	3	4	9
b. I think peacemaker programs help kids work out disagreements.	1	2	3	4	9
c. It is a good idea for kids to learn how to be peacemakers.	1	2	3	4	9
d. It's better for students to work out their own problems and not use peacemakers.	1	2	3	4	9
e. I don't understand how the peacemaking process is supposed to work.	1	2	3	4	9
f. Peacemaking has helped solve conflicts I've been in.	1	2	3	4	9
g. I don't think peacemaking works.	1	2	3	4	9
h. When peacemakers try to help solve a conflict, it doesn't stay fixed; the same kids may start fighting again soon.	1	2	3	4	9

Would you like to make any other comments about conflict resolution, or safety and security in the school? If so, please make them below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your assistance.

The Board of Education, Toronto

INTERNAL MEMO

TO: Homeroom Teacher Participants in Conflict Resolution Questionnaire
FROM: Rob Brown, Research Officer, Research Services
DATE: 15 May 95
SUBJECT: Questionnaires for Secondary Students

First of all, thank you very much for your interest in having your class participate in this questionnaire about conflict resolution, and school safety and security.

At some point that's convenient to you and the class in May or the beginning of June, please distribute the questionnaires to students. The questionnaire should take students about 20-30 minutes to do. When students are finished, please put them in the attached return envelope, and drop it in Board mail.

The questionnaires are anonymous: no student will be identified. Please let the students know that they should not put their names on the questionnaire. Participation in the questionnaire is voluntary, although the more students who participate, the more the results will accurately reflect the opinions and thoughts of Toronto students.

There should be enough questionnaires for each student registered in the homeroom (we've attached a few extra copies as well, just in case). If you need additional copies, please don't hesitate to call me or Lisa Rosolen, and we'll send extra copies as soon as possible.

We will send you summary results of the questionnaires for your homeroom once we have them ready (probably in September). As well, you will be sent copies of the final results for all homeroom classes.

If you have any other queries or suggestions, please don't hesitate to call. My number is 397-3527; Lisa Rosolen can be reached at 397-3529.

Conflict Resolution Questionnaire for Secondary Students

School Climate

1. How much do you agree with the following statements about your school? (Circle the most appropriate number. Circle one number only for each question.)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
a. I like coming to this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. There is tension among the students at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. There is tension among teachers and some students here.	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. Teachers here treat students fairly.	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. I can talk to someone in the school when I have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. Teachers in this school show respect to students.	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. Students in this school show respect to teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. Students here show respect to each other.	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. Incidents of sexism occur in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
j. I feel safe on school property.	1	2	3	4	5	9
k. I feel safe outside of school property.	1	2	3	4	5	9
l. It is important to teach conflict resolution programs to students.	1	2	3	4	5	9
m. Students at this school do not have enough say over the things that are important to them.	1	2	3	4	5	9
n. I feel I "belong" in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
o. Racial incidents (name-calling, etc.) happen in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
p. Students here fight first and think second.	1	2	3	4	5	9
q. School rules are clear and fair.	1	2	3	4	5	9
r. Students here follow the school rules.	1	2	3	4	5	9
s. Teachers here follow the school rules.	1	2	3	4	5	9

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
t. Students here know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight.	1	2	3	4	5	9
u. Teachers here are good at keeping arguments between students from turning into fights.	1	2	3	4	5	9
v. Most students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
w. I am good at solving arguments without fighting.	1	2	3	4	5	9

Questions About Conflict in Your School

2. The following look at your perception of school conflicts. How often have you **observed** the following conflicts at your school, since January 1995?

	No Conflicts	1-3 Conflicts	4-6 Conflicts	7 or more Conflicts	Unsure/ Cannot Remember
a. Physical fights *with* weapons	1	2	3	4	9
b. Physical fights *without* weapons	1	2	3	4	9
c. Verbal disputes about property issues (e.g. disputes about money, clothing, jewelry, CD's etc.)	1	2	3	4	9
d. Verbal disputes about rumor and gossip (e.g. people talking about others behind their back, being "two-faced", etc.)	1	2	3	4	9
e. Verbal disputes about gender relations (e.g. disputes and insults between boys and girls, sexism, sex-stereo-typing, etc.)	1	2	3	4	9
f. Verbal disputes about race/racial issues (e.g. insults based on race, colour, religion, stereotyping etc.)	1	2	3	4	9

3. **Where** do conflicts **usually** happen at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) classroom
( ) washroom
( ) hall, other indoor space
( ) outdoors, on school property
( ) cafeteria
( ) other location: _____

4. **Who** is typically **involved** in conflicts at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) students
( ) staff
( ) gangs
( ) intruders
( ) other: _____

5. **Who** usually **responds** to conflicts at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) teachers
( ) administration (principal, vice-principals)
( ) students
( ) police
( ) other: _____
( ) no one

6. **How** are conflicts usually **resolved** at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) people in conflict work it out themselves
( ) staff member (teacher/administrator) mediates
( ) student/friend/peer mediates
( ) staff member chooses solution (i.e. contract, suspension, detention)
( ) other: _____
( ) conflicts are not usually resolved

7. **How** many conflicts have you been involved in at school since January 1995? (Please check one answer only.)

( ) no conflicts
( ) 1-3 conflicts
( ) 4-6 conflicts
( ) 7-15 conflicts
( ) over 15 conflicts

8. To what degree do you feel that the following threaten *your* personal safety while at the school or on school grounds? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer. Please circle one answer only.)

	Never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Always	Cannot Say
Pushing	1	2	3	4	5	9
Hitting	1	2	3	4	5	9
Threats	1	2	3	4	5	9
Weapons	1	2	3	4	5	9
Name-calling	1	2	3	4	5	9

Conflict Resolution

9. Have you taken a course or workshop on Conflict Resolution?
   ( ) no..... IF YOU HAVE NOT, GO TO QUESTION 11 ON THE NEXT PAGE.
   ( ) yes, at this school
   ( ) yes, at another school

10. *If you have taken a course or workshop on Conflict Resolution,*
Please respond to the following statements about Conflict Resolution. (Circle the most appropriate number. Circle one number only for each question.)

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Unsure/ Does not apply
The workshop on Conflict Resolution was interesting.	1	2	3	4	9
The workshop on Conflict Resolution was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	9
Most students would benefit from a workshop on Conflict Resolution.	1	2	3	4	9
I understand conflict better now.	1	2	3	4	9
I help my family/friends with their conflicts.	1	2	3	4	9
The Conflict Resolution program has made our school a better place.	1	2	3	4	9
Most students are in favour of the Conflict Resolution program.	1	2	3	4	9

Finally, a few questions about yourself to help us interpret the results.

11. In what grade are *most* of your courses? (Circle one only.)

    Grade 9 10 11 12 OAC

12. You are...

    ( ) male

    ( ) female

13. How old are you? _____ years old

14. Would you like to make any other comments about conflict resolution, or safety and security in the school? If so, please make them below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your assistance

Toronto Board of Education
Research Services

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is part of a joint Student Support Services/Research Services evaluation of Conflict Resolution programs, and school safety and security. It is being conducted at secondary and elementary schools across the city. Your name was randomly selected from a list of teachers in your school.

We would be grateful if you could please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. *Even if you have not been involved in Conflict Resolution workshops or programs, we would like to hear from you.*

All responses to the questionnaires will be confidential. No class or person will be identified.

Please return the questionnaire in Board mail by mid-June.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to call Rob Brown at Research Services (397-3527) or Conflict Resolution Advisors Kathy Harris or Tim Kearns (at 393-8377).

Yours truly,

Rob Brown
Research Officer

Conflict Resolution Programs: Secondary Teachers' Questionnaire

I. SCHOOL PROGRAM AND TEACHER INVOLVEMENT

1. In what grade (s) do you teach this school year? (Circle as <u>many</u> as applicable.)

   Grade 9 10 11 12 OAC

2. You are...

   ( ) male

   ( ) female

3. Do you teach conflict resolution strategies as a time-tabled part of your program?

   ( ) yes

   ( ) no

4. Do you integrate conflict resolution strategies into your program (but without time-tabling for it)?

   ( ) yes

   ( ) no

5. Do you feel your students would benefit if <u>you</u> had more training in conflict resolution?

   ( ) yes

   ( ) no

   ( ) not sure

6. Do you think your school programs would benefit if <u>the staff</u> had more training in conflict resolution?

   ( ) yes

   ( ) no

   ( ) not sure

7. Does your school have a conflict resolution or peer mediator program?

   ( ) yes

   ( ) no

   ( ) not sure

8. *If your school does have a conflict resolution or peer mediator program,*

	YES	NO
a. Have you been involved in training the peer mediators?	1	2
b. Have you been involved in integrating conflict resolution/peer mediation into your curriculum?	1	2
c. Have you participated in staff conflict resolution/ peer mediation training?	1	2

II. SCHOOL CLIMATE

1. How much do you agree with the following statements about your school? (Circle one number only for each question.)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
a. Students like coming to this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. There is tension among the students at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. There is tension among teachers and some students here.	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. Teachers here treat students fairly.	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. Students are encouraged to talk to an adult in the school when they have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. Teachers in this school show respect to students.	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. Students in this school show respect to teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. Students here show respect to each other.	1	2	3	4	5	9
i. Incidents of sexism occur in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
j. I feel safe on school property.	1	2	3	4	5	9
k. I feel safe outside of school property.	1	2	3	4	5	9
l. Students feel safe in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
m. It is important to teach conflict resolution programs to students.	1	2	3	4	5	9
n. Students at this school do not have enough say over the things that are important to them.	1	2	3	4	5	9
o. Racial incidents (name-calling, etc.) happen in this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
p. Students here fight first and think second.	1	2	3	4	5	9
q. School rules are clear and fair.	1	2	3	4	5	9
r. Students here follow the school rules.	1	2	3	4	5	9
s. Teachers here follow the school rules.	1	2	3	4	5	9

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a While	Never	Cannot say/ Unsure
t. Students ask me for help or advice.	1	2	3	4	5	9
u. Students here know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight.	1	2	3	4	5	9
v. Teachers here are good at keeping arguments between students from turning into fights.	1	2	3	4	5	9
w. Most students and teachers solve their arguments peacefully at this school.	1	2	3	4	5	9
x. I am able to resolve conflicts in a positive way in my personal and professional life.	1	2	3	4	5	9

III. QUESTIONS ABOUT CONFLICT IN YOUR SCHOOL

1. These questions look at your perception of school conflicts. How many of the following have you **observed** at your school, since January 1995?

	No Conflicts	1-3 Conflicts	4-6 Conflicts	7 or more Conflicts	Unsure/ Cannot Remember
a. Physical fights *with* weapons	1	2	3	4	9
b. Physical fights without weapons	1	2	3	4	9
c. Verbal disputes about property issues (e.g. disputes about money, clothing, jewelry, CD's etc.)	1	2	3	4	9
d. Verbal disputes about rumor and gossip (e.g. people talking about others behind their back, being "two-faced", etc.)	1	2	3	4	9

	No Conflicts	1-3 Conflicts	4-6 Conflicts	7 or more Conflicts	Unsure/ Cannot Remember
e. Verbal disputes about gender relations (e.g. disputes and insults between boys and girls, sexism, sex-stereotyping, etc.)	1	2	3	4	9
f. Verbal disputes about race/racial issues (e.g. insults based on race, colour, religion, stereotyping etc.)	1	2	3	4	9

2. **Where** do conflicts **usually** happen at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) classroom
( ) washroom
( ) hall, other indoor space
( ) outdoors, on school property
( ) lunchroom or cafeteria
( ) other location: _____

3. **Who** are typically **involved** in conflicts at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) students
( ) staff
( ) gangs
( ) intruders
( ) other: _____

4. **Who** usually **responds** to conflicts at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) teachers
( ) administration (principal, vice-principals)
( ) students
( ) police
( ) other: _____
( ) no one

5. **How** are conflicts usually **resolved** at your school? (You may check more than one answer.)

( ) people in conflict work it out themselves
( ) staff member (teacher/administrator) mediates
( ) staff member chooses solution (i.e. contract, suspension, detention)
( ) student/friend/peer mediates
( ) other: _____
( ) conflicts are not usually resolved

6. How many conflicts with students have you been involved in at school since January 1995? (Please check one answer only.)

( ) no conflicts
( ) 1-3 conflicts
( ) 4-6 conflicts
( ) 7-15 conflicts
( ) over 15 conflicts

7. To what degree do you feel that the following threaten *your* personal safety while at the school or on school grounds? (Please circle one answer only.)

	Never	Once in a while	Sometimes	Often	Always	Cannot Say
Pushing	1	2	3	4	5	9
Hitting	1	2	3	4	5	9
Threats	1	2	3	4	5	9
Weapons	1	2	3	4	5	9
Name-calling	1	2	3	4	5	9

IV. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. Have you taken a course or workshop on Conflict Resolution?

( ) no
( ) yes.....

2. *If you have participated in a workshop on Conflict Resolution,*
Please respond to the following statements about Conflict Resolution. (Circle one number only for each question.)

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Unsure/ Does not apply
a. The Conflict Resolution workshop was interesting.	1	2	3	4	9
b. The Conflict Resolution workshop was worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	9
c. Most students would benefit from learning about Conflict Resolution.	1	2	3	4	9
d. I understand conflict better now.	1	2	3	4	9
e. I use Conflict Resolution strategies in my personal life.	1	2	3	4	9
f. I use Conflict Resolution strategies in my professional life.	1	2	3	4	9
g. The Conflict Resolution program has made our school a better place.	1	2	3	4	9
h. Most students are in favour of the Conflict Resolution program.	1	2	3	4	9

Would you like to make any other comments about conflict resolution, or safety and security in the school? If so, please make them below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your assistance.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the attached envelope to Research Services.

Director
Joan M. Green

Associate Directors
Harold Brathwaite
John B. Davies

Comptroller of Finance
Ron Trbovich

Comptroller of Plant & Planning
Norbert J. Hartmann

TORONTO BOARD OF EDUCATION

155 College Street
Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1P6
Tel. (416) 397-3000
Fax (416) 393-9969

4 May 1995

Dear Toronto Board Teacher,

Sometime between 1993 and February 1995, you participated in a Conflict Resolution Workshop conducted by members of the Conflict Resolution Team (Judith Arbus, Kathy Harris, and Tim Kearns). The Conflict Resolution Team and Research Services would be very interested in your opinion of the workshops.

The following questionnaire should take about 7-10 minutes of your time. Please note that even if you cannot remember anything about the workshop, we would be interested in knowing that.

Please return the questionnaire (through Board mail) to Research Services by Friday, May 26. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at 397-3527 (or, if I am not in, ask for Lisa Rosolen at 397-3529).

Yours,

Rob Brown
Research Officer
Research Services

P.S. A note about confidentiality. All the answers you give are confidential, and will not be identified or identifiable. They will be used for **research purposes only**. After the final questionnaire has been received, the list of names and questionnaire numbers will be destroyed. This will make it impossible to identify any questionnaires-- that is, at that point they will be **anonymous** as well as **confidential**.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Conflict Resolution Workshop Participants: Questionnaire

This questionnaire is for teachers who had taken workshops in conflict resolution skills between 1993 and 1995.

1. The Conflict Resolution workshops were conducted over a number of years, and different people would respond to and remember different things. Overall, how much can you remember from the workshop(s) that you attended?

   ( ) a great deal of what was done in the workshop(s)
   ( ) a fair amount of what was done in the workshop(s)
   ( ) not very much of what was done in the workshop(s)
   ( ) very little or nothing from the workshop(s)

2. What information or activities from the workshop(s) do you remember as being most helpful?

   _____

   _____

   ( ) cannot remember enough to comment

3. Below are a number of statements about the conflict resolution workshops. Please circle the number that best reflects your answer. Please choose only one response for each answer.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Unsure/ Cannot Remember
All teachers should have this training	1	2	3	4	9
All administrators should have this training	1	2	3	4	9
All students should have this training	1	2	3	4	9
This training should be available for parents	1	2	3	4	9
Conflict Resolution skills are essential life skills	1	2	3	4	9

4. How useful did you find the skills and information on conflict resolution to your **personal life**?

   ( ) very useful to my personal life
   ( ) useful
   ( ) not very useful
   ( ) not at all useful
   ( ) cannot remember enough to comment

5. How useful did you find the skills and information on conflict resolution to your **teaching practice**?

( ) very useful to my teaching practice
( ) useful
( ) not very useful
( ) not at all useful
( ) cannot remember enough to comment

6. To what extent has this conflict resolution training **changed** your teaching practice?

( ) it has not changed my teaching practice at all
( ) it has changed my teaching practice a little
( ) it has changed my teaching practice a fair amount
( ) it has changed my teaching practice a lot

Please comment on your answer.

_____

_____

7. To what extent have you applied skills and information acquired on conflict resolution, in the following situations?

	Not at all	Somewhat	A lot	A great deal
In relating to my students	1	2	3	4
In relating to my colleagues	1	2	3	4
In relating to parents	1	2	3	4
In relating to outside professionals	1	2	3	4
In teaching subject content (e.g. English, Math, Music)	1	2	3	4
In organizing extra-curricular activities (e.g. drama, student council, sports teams, clubs)	1	2	3	4
In organizing co-curricular activities (e.g. advisory/ mentoring programs)	1	2	3	4

Log: Name of interviewee: _____

Position: _____

Time/Date: _____

Telephone number : _____

Hello my name is _____. I am calling from the Toronto Board's Research Services Department. Research Services and Student Support Services are looking at how the Conflict Resolution program is being implemented in participating schools.

We have been given your name as someone connected with the Conflict Resolution program in _____ school. We would be grateful if you could take about 10 minutes of your time to answer a few questions over the phone.

Would you have time now? IF YES, PROCEED WITH INTERVIEW.

IF NOT,

If you do not have time now, I would like to make an appointment at a time convenient to you. We are talking to people during the day and evening over the next 10 days. (Pause.) What would be a convenient time to call you?

Day: _____ Time _____

Phone number (if different from above): _____

Name of School:_____

Name of Contact:_____

1. What is the program called in your school? (e.g. Peacemakers, Peer Mediation)

_____

_____

(if more than one program, get names)

2. Could you briefly describe how the program works in your school? That is, how has it been organized in your school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What do you see as the program's most important features?

Feature 1: _____

_____

Feature 2: _____

_____

Feature 3: _____

_____

Feature 4: _____

_____

4a. What works well in the program, from your perspective?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4b. What difficulties have you encountered?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. What do you think should be changed?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Is your school planning on continuing with Conflict Resolution next year (that is, 1995-1996)?

( ) yes... IF YES: do you plan to ( ) modify ( ) expand, or ( ) maintain the program?

( ) no

6b. Why? (or what, if the school plans to modify the program)

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Are you yourself planning on continuing with your school's program next year?
( ) yes
( ) no.... IF NO... Why are you not continuing?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7b. Who will act as the school contact for next year?

_____

8. Would you like to make any other comments about the program in your school?

_____

_____

_____

_____